

**An Investigation into the Construction(s) and Representation(s) of  
Masculinity(ies) and Femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians**

By

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**Abstract**

With the use of SRI as an interpretive analytics combined with a gender-critical hermeneutical optic I have traced out some of the ways in which gender is constituted and performed in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. I demonstrate that normative and normalising engendering is operative in the text and that the discourse replicates hegemonic gendered structurings and machinations from the broader social and cultural environment of that milieu. As a result Christian bodies are scripted to perform according to the dominant cultural protocols and engendering praxes. Because Paul is structured by and functions within the larger discourses of the ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s), one cannot comprehend the gendered rhetoric of 1 Corinthians without recourse to its interconnections with ancient gender discourses in general. Furthermore, when Paul is engaged in persuasion through the discourse of 1 Corinthians, gender construction(s) and representation(s), because of the nature of gender in the ancient world, is precisely what is at stake. It seems evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians tendentiously served to maintain and sustain hierarchical gendered relationships between men and women in the church at Corinth that mimicked the normative, androcentric, and kyriarchal power relations from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. These power dynamics continue to have an effect on many churches today because they understand Scripture to be regulative for Christian practice in our contemporary society in spite of the temporal and cultural separation of our world from that of the world of the New Testament. As a result contemporary churches reproduce gendered power relations that have been established in *habitus* which in turn enables replicated gendered structurings in society. In this regard the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians may be viewed as a text that functions as discourse in the making and sustaining of gendered and ideological normativities that continue to structure gendered bodies and bodiliness. It should be kept in mind that the structuredness of *habitus* came into being as the product of reiteration and sedimenting, and its dismantling similarly will come about as a result of reiteration.

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## Chapter 1:

### Introduction,<sup>1</sup> Research Analytic, Identity and Gender Theory

#### 1. Introduction

The relationship between men and women in Christian communities across time and culture has become a matter of acute interest in the contemporary church. Scholars have demonstrated that a history of androcentric leadership structures within the church have led to the marginalisation and subordination of many church women, who are often left only to fulfil quasi-domestic support roles within their church communities (Ruether 2000:60–66; Heuser, Körner and Rosenfeld 2004:77; Tamez 2006:111, 112, 114). Throughout church history up until very recently, many church leaders, as well as theologians and biblical scholars, have understood canonical texts to be teaching that women are inferior to men and, therefore, that they are to be prevented from taking up public leadership roles in society in general and in the church in particular (Allison 1988:27–60; Giles 2002:154–155). Moreover, such interpreters maintained the view that women were to keep silent in public, particularly in the church, and that women had to submit to the authority of men, due to the ideologically based belief that men were by nature superior to women (Austin 1995:209; Giles 2002:155).<sup>2</sup>

Conventionally women have functioned under stereotyped gender roles within the church and the Christian home, and they have been regarded, more often than not, as second class citizens to men and not as leaders in their own right (Gebara 2003:253; Arichea

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<sup>1</sup>Parts of this chapter, namely, the sub-section dealing with the introduction and the sub-section dealing with the research analytic, is based on some of my findings in chapter one of my Master's of Social Sciences thesis and reflects modifications and further developments. See Jodamus (2005:1–10). My PhD thesis to a large extent reflects a progression from my MA thesis and this aspect will be brought up again in chapters four through six above where I build upon the foundations laid in my MA thesis implementing SRI as a research analytics in combination with a gender-critical hermeneutical optic. For further discussion of this see what follows below under the section entitled research analytic.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Torjesen (1993) who claims that women were only suppressed in the church when it moved from the private space of communities meeting in people's home and into a more public space where women's involvement was considered socially unacceptable.

2004:468).<sup>3</sup> Very often women have been scripted to perform as home-maker, mother, and care-giver for the elderly in the domestic sphere to, fund-raiser, Sunday school teacher, deacon, worship leader (involved in the worship service through prayer, testimony and music and singing) and participant in various prayer groups in the church (Austin 1995:225; Meyer-Wilmes 1999:79; Ruether 2000:60–66).<sup>4</sup> These tasks and women's involvement in them are not intrinsically demeaning and insignificant. The underlying ideology, however, that limits their usefulness to only these functions, reveals a problematic conception of women that is debasing and marginalising in its effects. Are these roles, and ones similar to them, the sole domain of women and should this be the only legitimate functions performed by women within the church?<sup>5</sup> The scripting of women's bodies to function merely in the above-mentioned tasks and similar sorts would be tantamount to assuming that they are capable simply to perform seemingly domestic and supportive roles within the church (Pattison 1994:253).

In his critique of the role played by women in the African Independent Churches, Masondo (2002:162) mentions that women in many churches are regarded as “second-class citizens”. Although they comprise the majority numerically, more often than not the structures of power and decision-making are still controlled by men, and “women are -----

<sup>3</sup>As is well known, women within Christianity have also been subordinated and marginalised both within the home and the church on the basis of the same scriptural justifications (Russel 1985:139; Castelli 1991a:119; Austin 1995:218; Baumert 1996:182, 195; Mouton 2006:177, 182, 188). My main focus in this thesis concerns the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in the text of 1 Corinthians. The subordination and marginalisation of women and the superordination of men within many Pentecostal churches, based on canonical texts, has provided the impetus for my interest in the theme of gender and gendered relationships. In an attempt to illustrate an awareness of the fluidity and plurality of gendered constructions and gendered identities, in this thesis I opt to articulate this plurality by writing the terms as follows: construction(s), representation(s) identity(ies), masculinity(ies), femininity(ies). In cases where the text itself presents the words in a manner that suggests plurality, however, I have left out the bracketed “s” and only in cases where it may give the impression of referring to some sort of stable and homogenous construct have I inserted the bracketed “s”.

<sup>4</sup>For a discussion of the various prayer groups within which women in the African Independent Churches have functioned for many years in South Africa, see, West (1975a:51, 76, 90; 1975b:184–206); Gaitskell (1982:338–357; 1995:211–232; 1997:253–267); Brandel-Syrier (1984:13–18); Masondo (2002:145–166). Similarly see, Heuser, Körner and Rosenfeld (2004:85) for a brief discussion of some of the women's organisations in which women of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) have functioned for many years, namely, the Vrouediens and the Vroue Sending Bond. In other parts of the world and differing church traditions, other women too, have created alternate opportunities for themselves in the church. See for example, Austin (1995:225); Häring (1999a:120–122); Hunt (1999:102–114); May (1999:89–101); and Meyer Wilmes (1999:69–88).

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Bennett (1986:169–174) and Mosala (1986:129–133, 172).



relegated to minor positions or heads of women's organizations". Masondo (2002:162) mentions further that while women are acknowledged for the financial contribution they make to the churches they attend, they are, however, seldom provided a "platform to make ecclesiastical or theological contributions". They may take on minor leadership responsibilities, but as soon as it becomes bigger, it then almost automatically necessitates male leadership (Masondo 2002:162).

Within the organisational composition of the African Independent Churches (AIC's or African Initiated Churches as they are also called) in South Africa, the small proportion of women who actually participate in leadership hierarchies is due to a practice observed by most African Independent Churches (Masondo 2005:89–103).<sup>6</sup> The phenomenon of women being in the majority, but decision-making positions being controlled by men is not only peculiar to the AIC. In fact this seems to be a general occurrence that happens across cultures and in many places. This practice only permits women to hold office because of their husbands' status in the church (Pretorius and Jafta 1997:221). Nevertheless, in these exceptional cases, women are often accountable to men, even though these men themselves have no leadership qualifications and are utterly ineffective in their positions (West 1975a:52; Masondo 2002:160).

The phenomenon of women being subordinated and marginalised within the church is not restricted to the African Independent Churches or to churches in South Africa; rather, this phenomenon seems to be a general occurrence across cultures (Hunt 1999:110; Gebara 2003:253; Pui-lan 2005:9).<sup>7</sup> Although such problems exist in many churches in a pronounced way, other churches have rejected the exclusion of women from decision-making and other

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<sup>6</sup>See further, Austin (1995:209–212) and her discussion of "Black-Baptist clergywomen" residing in Southeastern North Carolina; Phiri (1997:17) discusses this in her analysis of the women in the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP) in Central Malawi; Arichea (2004:468) discusses this in relation to churches in Asia; and Tamez (2006:111, 114) discusses this in relation to women in Latin America. Also see Ackermann (1999:90) and Mouton (2006:177, 180, 182, 188).

<sup>7</sup>For further discussion also see Jakobsen (1994:156); Heuser, Körner and Rosenfeld (2004:67–101); and Klein (2004:40–52).

leadership positions and have made strides towards changing the situation (Deifelt 2003:241; Klein 2004:49).<sup>8</sup>

Scholars have demonstrated that church women rarely function on church boards or influential structures of leadership, and when they do, more often than not, they are in attendance to voice the issues of women in the church rather than as leaders addressing issues that have an affect on the broader church (Phiri 1997:13, 43, 91; Yamaguchi 2003:212).<sup>9</sup> The lack of awareness and consideration for issues regarding women in the church, and specifically church ministry, is symptomatic of the fact that these aspects are fully concretised and socialised within people that they often go unnoticed (Pattison 1994:241; Gebara 2003:255; Hewitt 2003:453). People have become so familiar with thinking along this trajectory that many women themselves have acquiesced to the normative nature of their lack of influence and their exclusion from hierarchical, male dominated, church leadership structures and positions of influence and decision-making (Austin 1995:215; Gebara 2003:253, 255; Tamez 2006:8). The result is that many churches today are still run on androcentric structures that exclude women from positions of power in the church (Yamaguchi 2003:212–215; Heuser, Körner and Rosenfeld 2004:92; Pui-lan 2005:9).<sup>10</sup>

The stigmatisation of women in the church as subordinate and their concomitant nonexistence in church leadership/ministry has been promulgated and authenticated by ministers, pastors, church leaders, theologians, and biblical scholars, who are mostly male, with the use of certain canonical texts as validation that their assertions are biblically founded and, therefore, normative for the church (Phiri 1997:14–15, 49–53; Mouton 2006:177).<sup>11</sup>

Bennett (1986:169) remarking on women in ministry suggests that “only a return to the Jesus

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<sup>8</sup>For further discussion also see Hunt (1999:105, 108) and Mouton (2006:182).

<sup>9</sup>For further discussion and examples of the exclusion of women from decision-making and other leadership positions within the church, see Schüssler Fiorenza and Häring (1999:viii); Jakobsen (2000:133); and Phiri (2000:156).

<sup>10</sup>I agree with Gebara (2003:253, 255, 256), a Latin American, feminist scholar, who maintains that gender equality and justice within the church need to occur at a structural level for them to be effective. Although the introduction to this chapter has focused on the contemporary church, and in particular the problem of the subordination and marginalisation of women in many churches. The aim of this thesis, however, is not to address the contemporary church issue directly, although the practices and beliefs of many contemporary churches provide the motivation behind this thesis.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Punt (1998:282–283; 2001:62, 67–68) for a discussion of the Bible as a “foundational document”.

movement” and to how Jesus perceived women, can provide present day women with the “ideological artillery” needed to engage in their liberation struggle.<sup>12</sup> Tamez (2006:31–33) agrees with this postulation. According to her the “life of Jesus is the Christian model par excellence . . . Jesus’ attitude toward women was never discriminatory, however radical a break with the traditions of his time he saw this to be” (Tamez 2006:31).

I disagree with this notion and propose instead that the biblical perspective, and in the case of this thesis, particularly Paul’s gender conceptualisation(s) of women and men, needs to be called into question and re-evaluated. The impetus for my assertion comes from dissatisfaction with the traditional, as well as many contemporary uses of Paul’s construction(s) and representation(s) of women and men in 1 Corinthians, often ideologically used among church groups, to validate patriarchal/kyriarchal relationships between women and men.<sup>13</sup> I propose that a more holistic interpretation of the texts that deal with Paul’s gender conceptualisation(s) of women and men in 1 Corinthians is required to create more liberating life experiences for those churches and church members, who often fall prey to stereotypical, androcentric, reiteration of ancient gendered normativities, as if they were “natural” to the Corinthians and are “natural” in contemporary settings.

An additional reason for my argument stems from my dissatisfaction with several interpretations proposed by scholars primarily using a historical critical method of analysis. Their interpretations are employed by many Christians to legitimate the claim that women should be subordinate to men and, therefore, excluded from the general leadership of the

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<sup>12</sup>Also see Edet (1989:96) who proposes a similar understanding of Jesus and the liberation of women. Jewish feminists, however, most notably Heschel (1990:2–28, 95–97) and Plaskow (1993:117–129), disagree with this postulation and view such arguments as anti-Judaism. Also see Pui-lan (2005:184) who cautions against constructing a symbol of Christ that is anti-Judaism in order to serve a “Christian imagination” that posits liberation for women. Cf. Corley (1996:52) who calls for a deconstruction of the “myth of Christian origins”.

<sup>13</sup>Schüssler Fiorenza (2001:118) has coined the neologism “kyriarchy”. According to her, “Kyriarchy is best theorized as a complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social structures of superordination and subordination, of ruling and oppression” (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001:118). Gebara (2003:254) notes that this neologism leaves “behind the oversimplification, mechanistic at times, of oppressors and oppressed” and allows an interpreter to “enter into the complexity of human relations and the reproduction of structures of domination at different levels of human life”. For the development of this concept, bibliographic documentation, and further discussion of the notion of kyriarchy, see, among others, Schüssler Fiorenza (1994:34–42; 2000:46; 2001:121–122; 2007:84, 128). Also, see Schüssler Fiorenza (2001:116–117) for a list of reasons which articulate the inadequacy of understanding systemic oppression as patriarchy.

church (Giles 2002:146). Often texts in 1 Corinthians have been used to sanction asymmetrical gender relations consigning women to docility and subordination in the church (Corrington 1991:223–231; D’ Angelo 1995:131–164; Giles 2002:147–155).<sup>14</sup>

I wish to argue that these suppositions are founded on flawed and ideologically motivated interpretations of a culturally configured text, construed as though the culture, in which the text was written, namely Graeco-Roman culture, was normative for Christianity itself both then and now. In this thesis I have chosen to focus on 1 Corinthians because of the significance attributed to some of the texts found in 1 Corinthians by those who wish to sustain “asymmetrical relations of power”, as Thompson (1990:7) puts it, between men and women in the church (Giles 2002:146–157, 165–166; Arichea 2004:460–469).<sup>15</sup> I hypothesise that Paul’s gender conceptualisation(s) as represented in 1 Corinthians reflects his ideological opinion constructed primarily in terms of the first and second century Graeco-Roman cultural values and traditions, as well as Paul’s own Jewish cultural values and traditions.<sup>16</sup> I will argue that he has unconsciously accepted the patriarchy/kyriarchy of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture without questioning its validity for the construction of a new and alternative Christian culture. I propose, therefore, that the gender conceptualisation(s) represented in 1 Corinthians is limited to an ancient context with vastly different cultural presuppositions, and, therefore, cannot be transposed as a normative and normalising Christian imperative appropriate for contemporary living, particularly in first world settings. This suggests that the various ideological interpretations purported in many churches and by many people, and used to authenticate androcentric gender relations needs to be questioned through critical analysis and re-evaluation .

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<sup>14</sup>For further discussion highlighting which texts in 1 Corinthians have been used to legitimate and sustain asymmetrical gender relations in many churches see chapter two of this thesis.

<sup>15</sup>Phiri (1997:49–53, 98–99, 103) in her analysis of the women in the Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) has demonstrated how certain scriptural texts were used to sanction the subordination of Chewa women in Malawi. According to her analysis the main texts used to validate the subordination of women at the CCAP were 1 Corinthians 11:7-10 and 14:34-35. For further discussion and evidence of the use of 1 Corinthians as validation for the subordination of women and the superordination of men, also see Hayter (1987); Allison (1988:27–60); Baumert (1996:182, 195, 310–314); and Merkle (2006:527–538).

<sup>16</sup>My emphasis. By writing terms with the bracketed “s” at the end as I do here with the term conceptualisation(s) and elsewhere in this thesis I wish to emphasise the plurality inherent in these terms.

## 2. Research Analytic

Mouton (2002:25) notes, “A growing awareness of the multi-dimensional nature of textual communication during the second half of the twentieth century stimulated the urge for some kind of an integrating, organizing, comprehensive, all encompassing approach toward the biblical documents”.<sup>17</sup> According to Robbins (2002a:123) sociorhetorical interpretation (SRI) offers a full turn in biblical interpretation and allows for “translocational, transtextual, transdiscursive, transcultural, and transtraditional interpretations that includes disenfranchised voices, marginalized voices, recently liberated voices, and powerfully located voices”.<sup>18</sup> Together with Robbins I believe that SRI, which provides a multi-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary and dialogical interpretive framework for analysing New Testament texts,<sup>19</sup> offers interpreters the possibility of a more holistic interpretation of any text (Robbins 1996a:41; 1992:xxv; 2002b:58).<sup>20</sup>

The fundamental basis of SRI requires the interpreter to create a conscious plan of reading and rereading a text from different angles, with consideration given to different phenomena implicit in the text. This kind of interpretive approach is what Robbins (1996a:12; 2004a:1; 2009:xiv, xvii) and others have called, an “interpretive analytics”. Robbins (2009:4) distinguishes SRI as an interpretive analytic in order to avoid confusing it with a particular research method. He mentions that a method employs a fixed number of analytical strategies with the intention of attaining a conclusion that is better than those employed by other methods. The objective of a method is to rule out the analytical strategies used by alternative methods by adopting better strategies to achieve a limited research

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<sup>17</sup>Also see Horsley (2000a:82).

<sup>18</sup>At the inception of this research analytic the preferred way of writing this term was to use the hyphenated “socio-rhetorical” as may be seen in Robbins (1996a; 1996b). Currently, however, Robbins (2009:xiv) prefers SRI and SRA (without the hyphen) and eschews the term “S-R Criticism”. Following this new development by Robbins (2009), I too will from this point and onward refer to SRI unless directly quoting from a particular reference.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996a:16; 1996b:2). Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c:217) have noted that texts comprise “complex negotiations” and maintain that SRI offers a thickly textured and multifaceted approach to engage these intricacies within texts.

<sup>20</sup>For a discussion and brief overview of SRI as a dynamic research analytic see Pillay (2008:28–40).

objective (Robbins 2009:4–5). An interpretive analytic may be distinguished from a method because an analytic invites other analytical approaches to “illumine something the first set of strategies did not find, exhibit, discuss, and interpret” (Robbins 2009:5). Quoting Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983:199), Robbins (1996a:12; 2009:xvii, xxiii) mentions that:

An interpretive analytics approaches texts as discourse and ‘sees discourse as part of a larger field of power and practice whose relations are articulated in different ways by different paradigms’. The rigorous establishment of the relations of power and practice is the analytic dimension. The courageous writing of a story of the emergence of these relations is the interpretive dimension.

According to Robbins (2004a:1) this constitutes an approach that assesses and re-configures its tactics as it embarks upon “multi-faceted” discursive engagement with the texts and other related phenomena that come within its scope.<sup>21</sup> The final product of such an “interpretive analytic” is “a richly textured and deeply reconfigured interpretation” (Robbins 1996a:3). The three areas of dialogue that are investigated by this interpretive approach are “the world created by the text, the world of the author and the world of the interpreter” (Robbins 1996a:40). These three aspects and their interrelatedness will be further analysed in what follows below. It is thus my aim to apply the SRI analytic developed by Robbins and others to the analysis of texts that deal with the gender issues and representations in 1 Corinthians. This effort will be directed to achieving a more holistic exegesis of the texts that have often been used ideologically to authenticate patriarchal/kyriarchal relationships between women and men in various church communities.

According to Robbins (1998a:8), “Socio-rhetorical criticism is an approach to literature that focuses on values, convictions, and beliefs both in the texts we read and in the world in which we live”. This multifaceted and dialogical approach views “texts as

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<sup>21</sup>Robbins (1999a:298) mentions that the difference between “texts” and “discourse” is that “discourse is a social process in which texts are embedded while text is a concrete material object produced in discourse”.

performances of language in particular historical and cultural situations” (Robbins 2009:xxviii). The “socio” in the word “sociorhetorical” is indicative of the multiple tools brought to this type of analysis by contemporary studies in anthropology and sociology (Robbins 1996b:1). With this in its scope, SRI moves beyond historical studies and delves into the trajectory of “cultural discourse, social contexts and sociological and anthropological theory” (Robbins 1998a:288). The “rhetorical” in the word “sociorhetorical”, signifies how language inherent in a text is a medium of communication and also zooms in on the manner in which a text makes use of diverse subjects, themes and issues to communicate its particular message (Robbins 1996b:1). By using the term “rhetorical” this approach advances beyond the “limits of literary study to the interrelation of communication, theology, philosophy, and the social sciences” (Robbins 1996b:1; 1998a:288).

By interweaving an array of multifaceted and specialised areas of analysis in dialogue with one other, this programmatic, textually rooted approach “focuses on literary, social, cultural and ideological issues in texts” (Robbins 1996a:1). This permits an interpreter to explore various features contained within a text. Robbins (1996b:3) classifies these features as “textures”, and maintains that sociorhetorical interpretation serves to investigate the manifold “textures” found in texts. Similar to a richly textured, thickly woven tapestry, a text is comprised of “complex patterns and images” which results in a multiplicity of interwoven textures within a specific text (Robbins 1996b:2). These “textures” have been classified as “inner texture”, “intertexture”, “social and cultural texture”, “ideological texture” and “sacred texture” (Robbins 1996a:3; 1996b:3).<sup>22</sup>

Recently these textures have been further developed and now include three further types of analysis: rhetography, rhetoric, and rhetorlect analysis.<sup>23</sup> Rhetography refers to  
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<sup>22</sup>Due to the progressive nature of SRI, sacred texture does not appear in Robbins (1996a); however, it does appear in the later book, Robbins (1996b).

<sup>23</sup>This new development extends beyond the earlier work done by Robbins (1996a; 1996b), by paying attention to sociorhetorical analysis and interpretation of conventional types of discourse (Robbins 2009:6). According to Robbins (2004b) the objective of these developments are aimed at integrating the progymnastic and textured phases of SRI, that is, the initial phases of SRI as noted in Robbins (1996a; 1996b), with the phase, since December 2002, which now incorporates “conceptual blending theory and critical spatiality theory”. For a discussion and explication of these new developments, see Robbins (2004a; 2004b).

the visual imagery or pictorial narrative and scene construction contained in rhetorical depiction (Robbins 2004a:17–18; 2009:6, 16). This “progressive, sensory-aesthetic, and/or argumentative texture of a text” allows “a hearer/reader to create a graphic image or picture in the mind that implies a certain kind of truth and/or reality” (Robbins 2009:xxvii).<sup>24</sup> Rhetology, on the other hand, refers to “the logic of rhetorical reasoning” (Robbins 2009:16). Robbins (2009:xxvii) maintains that rhetology creates assertions verified by explanation and rationale; made clear by “opposites and contraries; energized by analogies, comparisons, examples (rhetography); and confirmed by authoritative testimony in a context either of stated conclusions or of progressive texture that invites a hearer/reader to infer a particular conclusion” (Robbins 2009:xxvii).<sup>25</sup> According to Robbins (2009:6) “early Christians reconfigured multiple forms of preceding and contemporary discourse by blending” rhetography with rhetology in ways that formed distinct “social, cultural, ideological, and religious modes of understanding and belief in the Mediterranean world”. Rhetography is often as significant as rhetology according to Robbins (2009:17). Thus, he asserts,

The speaker and audience are integral parts of the rhetography, working interactively and dynamically with the reasoning (rhetology) in the speech. The reasoning in the speech, however, also will use vivid picturing (rhetography) to create its effects. It is essential to work comprehensively with the interrelation of rhetology and rhetography in analysis and interpretation of early Christian argumentation (Robbins 2009:17).

Robbins (1996c:356; 2009:xiv, xxvii) coined the term “rhetorolect”, also termed a belief system or form of life, to describe a particular mode of discourse because he understands early Christian discourse to consist of a series of identifiable “rhetorical dialects” that interacted with one another in shaping the emerging Christian discourse. This was developed as a key option to Graeco-Roman rhetoric, which had as its main focus only three

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<sup>24</sup>His emphasis.

<sup>25</sup>His emphasis.



modes, namely, judicial, deliberative, and epideictic (Robbins 2009:xiv). Robbins (1996c:356) defines a rhetorlect as “a form of language variety or discourse identifiable on the basis of a distinctive configuration of themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations”.<sup>26</sup>

SRI as developed by Robbins and others has identified six major Christian rhetorlects which contributed dynamically to the creation of the early Christian speaking and writing that occur within New Testament literature and other early Christian writings (Robbins 2002a:27; 2009:7). These include: wisdom,<sup>27</sup> miracle, prophetic, suffering-death (now called priestly),<sup>28</sup> apocalyptic and pre-creation (Robbins 1996c:353–362; 2002a:27, 30).<sup>29</sup> According to Robbins (2009:xxviii), “Whatever rhetorlects, belief systems, or forms of life people enact either consciously or unconsciously as speakers, writers, or interpreters, the choice exhibits distinctive socio-rhetorical features of their discourse, beliefs, dispositions, and actions”. He notes further that “[e]arly Christians blended these rhetorlects into one another in the three literary modes contained in the New Testament: biographical historiography (Gospels and Acts), epistle, and apocalypse (Revelation to John)” (Robbins 2009:7). Robbins (2009:7–8) acknowledges the possibility of alternative modes of discourse, beyond these six, and that they were definitely operative in first century Christian discourse, but he maintains that at minimum these six served as the main modes of discourse from the period spanning the first seventy years (30-100 CE) of the birth of Christianity.

Several factors have caused me to choose SRI for doing New Testament exegesis, in contrast to the more traditional, historical critical approach. First, SRI’s multifaceted approach seeks to take seriously the complexity of written documents as social and cultural constructions that serves as persuasive communications. The often employed historical-

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<sup>26</sup>Also see Robbins (1996c:353–362; 2002a:27–65; 2009:xx vii-xx viii).

<sup>27</sup>The social interactions and well-being of people set the basis for the main topics of wisdom discourse, with a particular emphasis upon the relations of “parent/child, patron/client host/guest, friendship, limited goods, honor/shame, life/death” (Robbins 2002a:31). 1 Corinthians is comprised “centripetally” (Robbins 2002a:27) of wisdom discourse. The reason for this is that a preponderance of the issues addressed in the letter are associated with wisdom rhetorlect.

<sup>28</sup>The suffering-death rhetorlect is now called “priestly.” This change was signalled in a series of papers on priestly rhetorlect presented to the Rhetoric and the New Testament Seminar at the Society of Biblical Literature meeting 20 November, 2004 in San Antonio, TX (Robbins 2004c).

<sup>29</sup>For further discussion of the six major rhetorical modes of discourse, see Robbins (1996c:356–360; 2002a:31–63; 2009:xxi, xxiv, xxv, xxvi, xxvii, xxix, xxx, 121–174, 219–259, 329–391, 491–492).

critical method, although valuable as a research tool, was not “designed to explore the inner nature of texts as written discourse” (Robbins 1996a:8).<sup>30</sup> As Robbins (1996a:8) asserts, “Their role was, and still is, to answer a comprehensive range of historical and theological questions about people who can be identified as Christians and about events, institutions and beliefs that exhibit the history of the growth and expansion of the phenomenon we call Christianity”. One might go even further and say that historical criticism was always interested in constructing the events and history behind the text. For this reason the text tended to be treated as merely a source of information rather than an object for investigation in its own right.

From the rhetorical vantage point of this thesis I will argue that Paul is engaged in the art of persuasion, and that his rhetoric is a rhetorical construction which combines “historical” and “sociorhetorical” aspects and emphasises that a historical approach can no longer function without a sociorhetorical approach and that a sociorhetorical approach must be historical. Because Paul’s identity itself has been formed by the engendered discursive patterns of ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s), or to put it differently, because Paul’s body has also been produced by Graeco-Roman gendered discursive practices, the gendered rhetoric of 1 Corinthians cannot be divorced from the discursively formed gendered patterns of its context. There is then no unique subject with his own philosophical ideas “addressing” a situation but someone who cannot but use what was strategically available to him even when there is a tinge of subversion in his rhetoric.

Second, SRI provides the prospect of a rich and complex analysis and interpretation of texts. Given my aims in this thesis sociorhetorical interpretation offers a way in which

to bring the margins and boundaries into view, to invite the interpreter into the discourses  
that dwell in those marginal spaces, to criticize the dominating interpretive practices that

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<sup>30</sup>See Segovia (2003a:107–110) for a discussion that briefly traces the disciplinary history of historical criticism. Cf. Stenström (2005:31–46) and Vander Stichele and Penner (2005:1–30). For a discussion of the inadequacy of historical critical interpretation and for a brief history that traces the rising opposition to this method of interpretation also see Scholz (2005:47–70).

exclude these marginal discourses and to seek discourses of emancipation for marginalized, embodied voices and actions in the text (Robbins 1996a:11).

Furthermore, included in SRI are insights from “socio-linguistics, semiotics, rhetoric, ethnography, literary studies, social sciences, and ideological studies” (Robbins 2004a:1). The concluding interpretive analysis, based on this method of interpretation, that juxtaposes and sets various systems of thought into dialogue, results in an interpretation that is more interdisciplinary, broad-based and holistic (Robbins 2004a).

There are a few implications that come with SRI as an interpretive analytics. First, SRI represents a “‘system’ approach to interpretation” (Robbins 1996a:40). This implies that deductions, assertions and approaches used in one area of analysis are perpetuated throughout the entire investigative process (Robbins 1996a:41). Second, SRI implements a system of reading and rereading a text from various perspectives, so as to create a “‘revalued’ or ‘revisited’ rhetorical interpretation” (Robbins 1996a:40–41). The potency of this approach is that it permits the various research features of other disciplines to operate in their own arenas of specialty, while prohibiting a single discipline from dictating the dialogue (Robbins 1996a:41). As a result no method of interpreting a text is excluded from the discussion. This does not imply that all interpretive strategies are employed or that they are of equal value. Instead it suggests and invites dialogue from other disciplinary modes in an effort to illuminate each other’s “insights and ideologies” (Robbins 1998a:288). The end result is an interpretation of a text that is more interdisciplinary and holistic (Robbins 1996a:41). Additionally, this type of dialogue is based upon an “ethnography of orality, writing, and reading” (Robbins 1998a:287). This refers to the fact that the primary concern of a sociorhetorical interpretation is not solely the text’s content, but rather, the dialogue that takes place between the “content and its mode of production” (Robbins 1998a:289).

Third, SRI utilises the same procedures used to investigate “other people’s interpretations of the text under consideration as the strategies for analyzing the biblical text itself” (Robbins 1996a:41). This coincides with the inherent nature of sociorhetorical interpretation, which implies that both texts and interpretations of texts have the ability to

construct “history, society, culture, and ideology” (Robbins 1996a:41). This, therefore, disallows one interpretation from dictating and being authoritative in its claims, without itself being subjected to sociorhetorical scrutiny (Robbins 1996a:41; 2004a).

I maintain, on the basis of the above discussion, that SRI is well suited to assist me in a more holistic analysis of the texts in 1 Corinthians, and, therefore, I will implement this research analytic in my thesis. It should be noted that I will not be using SRI in a programmatic way as outlined in Robbins (1996a; 1996b); however, because SRI allows for the interaction of diverse investigative approaches, I will be employing SRI together with a gender-critical approach to biblical studies.

A gender-critical approach takes seriously the argumentative nature of rhetoric and focuses upon issues such as gender construction(s) and identity(ies) within a text (Okland 2004; Vander Stichele and Penner 2005).<sup>31</sup> Through the use of SRI combined with a gender-critical approach to the analysis of New Testament texts, my aim in this thesis, therefore, will be to investigate how Paul through the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians constructs and represents gender in the discourse of the text.<sup>32</sup> Before I do this, however, I must discuss contemporary identity and gender theory as it provides the key conceptual frameworks and analytical tools that informs my analysis of gender construction(s) and gender representation(s) in 1 Corinthians.

### **3. Contemporary Identity and Gender Theory**

#### **3.1. Identity Theory.**

Calhoun (1994:9) commenting on the construction of identity states, “We know of no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made”. He mentions further, “Self-knowledge - always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery - is never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others” (Calhoun 1994:10). In these

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<sup>31</sup>For further discussion see chapter two of this thesis.

<sup>32</sup>For further discussion see chapter four, five, and six of this thesis.

two statements Calhoun alludes to the notion that identity is firstly universal and secondly that it is something that is constructed as opposed to something innate that needs discovering. The latter part of this assertion, namely, that identity is something constructed and not something innate or natural needing discovery plays a crucial role in contemporary discussions of identity theory and will be elaborated upon later in this chapter. The constructedness of identity(ies) also has a bearing upon understanding ancient identities, and this aspect will be further developed in what follows. For now the focus will turn firstly to the issue of defining identity.

According to Castells (2010:6) identity, as it refers to social actors, may be understood as “the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or related set of cultural attributes, that is/are given priority over other sources of meaning”. This suggests that for any given individual there may be a plethora of identities, as a person may at any given moment choose to give priority to certain sources of cultural attributes over and above others, which will inevitably lead to the construction of a particular identity (Castells 2010:6). Similarly, that same person may at another time give priority of meaning to other sources of cultural attributes which will inevitably then lead to a different construction of identity.

Castells (2010:6) departs from using the traditional sociological terms to describe identity, namely, “roles” and “role sets”, and instead calls for a differentiation of terms.<sup>33</sup> Roles, according to Castells (2010:7) “are defined by norms structured by the institutions and organizations of society. Their relative weight in influencing people’s behavior depend upon negotiations and arrangements between individuals and these institutions and organizations”. Identity, on the other hand, is the origins of “meaning” for individuals, formed through a system of “individuation” (Castells 2010:7).

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<sup>33</sup>For a discussion of status and role theory, see Calhoun (1994:13).

According to this notion, therefore, identities may only be regarded as such, if and when individuals “internalize them, and construct their meaning around this internalization” (Castells 2010:7).<sup>34</sup> This seems similar to what Giddens (1991:52) calls “reflexive awareness”. Giddens (1991:52) maintains that self-identity “is not something that is just given, as a result of the continuities of the individual’s action-system, but something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual”. It should be noted, however, that certain self-definitions of identity may also comply with social roles, an example of which as noted by Castells (2010:7) is when being a father is the most profound self-definition of identity from the individual’s perspective. In this particular situation it would thus seem as though the person was merely enacting a social role. According to the definition given by Castells (2010:7), however, because this individual has “internalized” the identity of a father and constructed “meaning” around this “internalization”, fatherhood, is, therefore, not merely this person’s social role but has *become* an identity.<sup>35</sup> Identities, therefore, from the perspective of Castells (2010:7) and Giddens (1991:52–53) are constructed through a dynamic process that consists of “self-construction and individuation” (Castells 2010:7) and “reflexive awareness” (Giddens 1991:52).

Castells (2010:7) argues further that the construction of identity utilises properties “from history, from geography, from biology, from productive and reproductive institutions, from collective memory and from personal fantasies, from power apparatuses and religious revelations”. He also adds that “individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework” (Castells 2010:7). These suggestions leads Castells (2010:7) to hypothesise that generally the person “who constructs collective identity, and for what [purpose], largely determines the symbolic

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<sup>34</sup>Castells (2010:7) defines “meaning” as “the symbolic identification by a social actor of the purpose of her/his action”. Furthermore, he maintains that “*in the network society*” most social actors organise meaning “around a primary identity (that is an identity that frames the others), which is self-sustaining across time and space” (Castells 2010:7). His emphasis.

<sup>35</sup>My emphasis.

content of this identity, and its meaning for those identifying with it or placing themselves outside of it". This statement may prove to be significant when applied to the text of 1 Corinthians, where Paul seeks to be the primary creator of the collective Christian identity in Corinth and the text constructs the perception that he is the one who determines the symbolic content of that identity and its meaning.<sup>36</sup> This notion, will be brought up again in later chapters of the dissertation, and, therefore, is merely hinted at in this section of the dissertation. Because the social construction(s) of identity constantly occurs in an environment marked by power relationships, Castells (2010:7–8) postulates a distinction between three types and origins of identity building, namely, "legitimizing identity", "resistance identity", and "project identity".<sup>37</sup>

These may be defined in the following way. First, "legitimizing identity" is the type of identity introduced by the prevailing institutions of society to enlarge and justify their domination via certain individuals (Castells 2010:8). Second, "resistance identity" points to the type of identity produced by individuals that are in "positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatized by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society" (Castells 2010:8). Third, "project identity" refers to the type of identity that is constructed when individuals, on the grounds of the cultural commodities that are accessible to them, construct a new identity that reshapes their place in society and results in the entire social structure being redefined and transformed (Castells 2010:8).

According to Castells (2010:8) identities that begin as "resistance" identities may generate "project" identities, and may also, over time, "become dominant in the institutions of society", and give rise to "legitimizing" identities to justify their domination. He mentions further that "the dynamics of identities along this sequence shows that, from the point of view

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<sup>36</sup>In chapter six of this thesis I will argue that this construction by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians is ideological and that the collective identity of the Corinthian Christians is primarily portrayed as a "legitimizing" masculine identity which has a direct impact upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the text. For further discussion see chapter six below.

<sup>37</sup>These analytical categories will play an integral role in trying to understand ancient gendered identities in chapter three of this thesis. See the introduction of chapter three for further discussion.

of social theory, no identity can be an essence, and no identity has, *per se*, progressive or regressive value outside its historical context” (Castells 2010:8).<sup>38</sup> The latter sentence seems similar to what Foucault (1980a:93–94, 97), in his comments on discourse and subjects, has asserted. Foucault (1985; 1986) challenged the stability of the individual subject and deconstructed the very notion of gendered and sexual identity.

According to Foucault (1991:87, 88, 94, 95) the subject is a historically specific product of discourse with no continuity from one subject to another.<sup>39</sup> In fact Foucault (1991:87–88) states, “Nothing in man—not even his body—is sufficiently stable to serve as the basis for self-recognition or for understanding other men”. He also maintains that “history will not discover a forgotten identity, eager to be reborn, but a complex system of distinct and multiple elements, unable to be mastered by the powers of synthesis” (Foucault 1991:94). Foucault (1997a:87; 1997b:224–225) argues further that one can find different types of “techniques of the self” in particular historical and cultural situations so that different types of subjects are constituted from different historical and social configurations. The subject, therefore, is exclusively only the product of history. Foucault (1980a:98) argues,

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual, that is, is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation.

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<sup>38</sup>His emphasis.

<sup>39</sup>Barker (2002:23) notes, “Language and discourse do not *represent* objects or reality but *constitute* them, bring them into being, so that social reality and social relations are discursively constituted in and through language rather than presented by language” (his emphasis). Barker (2002:24) elaborates more on this understanding of discursive constructions and claims, “The idea that identities are discursive constructions is underpinned by a view of language in which there are no essences to which language refers and therefore no essential identities”.



Thus, rather than seeing individuals as stable entities, he analyses the discursive processes through which bodies are constituted and maintains that the body is the site on which multiple discourses are enacted and where they are contested (Foucault 1980a:93–94, 97)<sup>40</sup>. He suggests further that the body should be seen as “the inscribed surface of events”, that is, political events and actions have a direct material effect upon the body which can be examined (Foucault 1991:83). He also described the body as “the illusion of a substantial unity” and “a volume in perpetual disintegration”, thus emphasising that what seems most solid is, in fact, constituted through a multiplicity of discursive processes (Foucault 1991:83). In this regard, because identity is constructed within history, that is, it is constructed in a particular time and under particular social and cultural circumstances, it seems apt, to describe identity as something that is fluid, dynamic, ambivalent and even precarious. Giddens (1991:53) supports this notion of identity and suggests that self-identity “is not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits, possessed by the individual. It is *the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography*”.<sup>41</sup> This complies with the assertion made by Barker (2002:17), namely, that “historically particular modes of production and social relations constitute subjects in specific ways so that what it is to be a person cannot be universal but is located in characteristics of the social formation of definite times and places”.

The current debate regarding identity theory has progressed through various stages with different suggestions. Hall (1992:275–277) demonstrates this development by marking a noticeable change in the theories pertaining to identity from the time of the Enlightenment up until our Modern and Postmodern period. He differentiates between three different ways to conceptualise cultural identity which he calls: “the Enlightenment subject”; “the sociological subject”, and “the postmodern subject” (Hall 1992:275–277). According to Hall (1992:275),

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<sup>40</sup>This discussion will become useful particularly in chapter three of this thesis which articulates how socio-cultural constraints construct particular types of ancient bodies and ancient construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies).

<sup>41</sup>His emphasis.

[The] Enlightenment subject was based on a conception of the human person as a fully centred, unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness and action, whose ‘centre’ consisted of an inner core which first emerged when the subject was born, and unfolded with it, while remaining essentially the same — continuous or ‘identical’ with itself — throughout the individual’s existence.

The sociological subject Hall (1992:275) mentions “reflected the growing complexity of the modern world and the awareness that this inner core of the subject was not autonomous and self-sufficient, but was formed in relation to ‘significant others’, who mediated to the subject the values, meanings and symbols — the culture — of the worlds he/she inhabited”. Hall (1992:277) defines the postmodern subject as “having no fixed, essential or permanent identity”. According to this postulation, identity, “becomes a ‘moveable feast’: formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems which surround us” (Hall 1992:277). The subject, therefore, is “historically, not biologically defined” and “assumes different identities at different times” which are not fixed to a stable “self” (Hall 1992:277).

Barker (2002:13–27) has built upon the three conceptualisations of identity as constructed by Hall (1992:273–325) and has attempted to sketch what he asserts to be “the development of the fractured, decentred or postmodern subject” (Barker 2002:13). The hypothesis of Barker (2002:13–32) will be discussed in the immediately proceeding paragraphs. For now the primary point is highlighting the progression of theories pertaining to identity construction(s). According to Barker (2002:16) the progression from the “‘Enlightenment subject’ to the ‘sociological subject’” depicts a change in three ways. First, it depicts a change from “perceiving persons as unified wholes”, which occurred in the period of the Enlightenment. Second, it depicts a change to the perception of “seeing the subject as formed socially”. And third, it depicts a change from the sociological subject, which presupposes that the subject has “a core self” and is “able to reflexively coordinate itself into a unity” to the hypothesis that individuals are fractured “postmodern subjects” (Barker 2002:16). According to this latter postulation the subject constructs many, “sometimes contradictory

identities” (Barker 2002:16). Fundamentally what has been asserted in the above three depictions of identity as constructed by Hall (1992:275–277) and commented on by Barker (2002:16) is effectively the development from understanding identity in terms of essentialism to understanding identity from an anti-essentialist perspective.<sup>42</sup> It seems to me that essentialism, represents the basic notion of identity construction of what Hall (1992:275–277) calls the “Enlightenment subject”. While anti-essentialism, represents the basic notion of identity construction which relates to the periods of what Hall (1992:275–277) has termed the “sociological subject” and the “postmodern subject”.

The discussion of this chapter will now move to clarifying these two seemingly antithetical constructions of identity, namely, essentialism and anti-essentialism.<sup>43</sup> Before I do this, however, it is necessary to first make clear the connection between gender and identity: gender is a primary form of identity construction that is socialised into subjects from their earliest experiences of life. The discussion of essentialism and anti-essentialism which follows is based on the assumption that identity is the general rubric under which gender can be explored. This type of theoretical framework is pivotal to understanding how gender was constructed and represented in the ancient Mediterranean and will serve to buttress further discussions in chapter three of this thesis.

According to an essentialist understanding of gender identity, one’s gender may be construed as an individual’s true self, founded upon the “natural” binary division of female and male. Essentialism maintains that identity comes before “social and linguistic coding”, and “transcends culture, history and geography” (Wieringa 2002:8; Lloyd 2005:37). The fundamental inference from this view is “that identity exists, and in both its individual and collective forms” it may be understood as an identifiable and fixed essence “that is *expressed*”  
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<sup>42</sup>See the pioneering work of Butler (1990; 1993:xvii) who totally dismantled the bulwarks of an essentialistic understanding of sex and gendered identity and rather posits an understanding of identity constructions as performative. Butler (1993) will again be drawn into the discussion which follows below. For further discussion on the subject of essentialism and anti-essentialism, see Calhoun (1994:12–20).

<sup>43</sup>See Lloyd (2005:55–71) for a discussion of essentialism and anti-essentialism as agonistic, rather, than antithetical. Because the nature of my analysis of these concepts is not to provide an extensive investigation, but rather, is aimed at foregrounding my investigation into ancient gendered identity, I have not bothered to entertain such differentiation and further theorising.

through symbolic representation” (Barker 2002:27).<sup>44</sup> The basic assumption of an essentialist conceptualisation of gender identity is that differing sexual reproductive capacity lies at the heart of gender differentiation.

The argument for an anti-essentialist conceptualisation of gender identity, on the other hand, postulates that gender is not an already existent absolute, a fixed possession based on the biological sex of the individual; rather, language and discourse construct gender identity as with other social identities (Barker 2002:31). Instead of seeing gender identity as referring to something fixed, anti-essentialism views gender identity as something fluid and dynamic, always moving and incomplete (Barker 2002:31; Mohammed 2002:xvi; Lloyd 2005:46, 48). It is also culturally determined and, therefore, there is not one understanding of what a woman or a man is. These constructions vary across time and across cultures. This conception of identity alludes to the notion that identities are fragmented, precarious and multiple. And this postulation is in opposition to the idea that identities are distinct and authentic, based on a core self or on shared origins or experiences that transcend culture, history and geography, as posited under essentialism (Lloyd 2005:56).

According to an anti-essentialist construction of identity one does not possess an identity, rather one comprises a multifold weave of attitudes and values brought together in a dynamic, “process of *becoming*” (Barker 2002:28).<sup>45</sup> In this regard there is no primary and homogeneous, innate essence of identity awaiting discovery, but rather, one’s identity is continually being constructed within multiple spheres of similarity and difference, which include but is not limited to aspects such as “class, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, morality and religion” (Barker 2002:28).<sup>46</sup> Also, in view of an anti-essentialist conception of identity, individuals are viewed as the constructions of particular, historically determinate, articulations of “discursive elements which are contingent but also socially determined” (Barker 2002:29). There is, therefore, no compulsory association between the numerous dis-

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<sup>44</sup>His emphasis.

<sup>45</sup>His emphasis. See Wieringa (2002:3–21) and Lloyd (2005) for further discussion of essentialism and anti-essentialism.

<sup>46</sup>Also see Jackson and Scott (2002:28) and Wieringa (2002:13).

courses of identity, whether by ethnicity, class, or gender (Barker 2002:29). On the contrary, this conception of identity proves that identities are conflicting and that they intermingle and dislodge one another in the context of the greater society and within individuals and could possibly give rise to a plethora of possible conceptualisations of gender constructions (Barker 2002:30; Wieringa 2002:16; Økland 2004:40, 52).

Another salient point pertaining to this type of anti-essentialist construction of identity as asserted by Barker (2002:31) is that identities are constructed within discourse or collectively shared and modified modes of speaking. This, as Barker (2002:31) maintains, suggests that identities are “discursive constructions”. Lloyd (2005:40) argues for a similar conception of identity and asserts that “what we are does not precede and shape discourse; rather, it is the effect of discourse”. Lloyd (2005:40) argues further that identity is not, therefore, a depiction of fundamental characteristics; rather, identity is a “political construction that presents those characteristics as natural”.<sup>47</sup> Barker (2002:31) goes as far as to argue that “there can be no identity, experience or social practice which is not discursively constructed” because language is inescapable in the production of each of these constructs.

The above discussion on the contemporary identity debate has demonstrated that the concept of identity, or rather, identities, are completely social constructions that cannot survive outside of cultural representations, reinscriptions and language. Given the importance of language to the construction of identity(ies) the statement of Barker (2002:31) that identities are “not our own, for they are stories constructed from the intersubjective resource of language” seems appropriate. Barker (2002:31) suggests further, “Since the meanings of language are themselves unstable and fluid we can talk of ‘identities-in-process’ rather than identity”.<sup>48</sup> Alluding further to the fluidity of identity he mentions that when one speaks about identity it intrinsically entails freezing the unstable and multifaceted meanings of lan-

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<sup>47</sup>Also see Lloyd (2005:21).

<sup>48</sup>Lloyd (2005:27) argues for a similar understanding of identity and maintains that the subject should be understood as “ambivalent, in-process, indeterminate, and terminally open to reinscription; a subject whose identity is always precarious, contingent and ambiguous”. For further discussion of how this notion of the subject relates to feminism and some feminist postulations that feminist politics require a stable or coherent subject, see Lloyd (2005:14–30).

guage and provisionally stabilising “the narrative of the self in a cut or strategic positioning of meaning” (Barker 2002:31). Ancient constructions of identity(ies), and in particular gender identity(ies), contained some clear parallels to many of the contemporary discussions surrounding identity theory and gender identity construction(s) and representation(s) as will become more evident in chapter three of this thesis. The main reason for the preceding discussion of these theories and the discussion that follows is to lay the necessary theoretical ground and provide a lens that will prove useful in the later stages of this thesis. In particular chapter three contains a discussion of gendered identities in the context of the ancient Mediterranean world from the first century.

### **3.2. Gender Theory.**

In the next section of this chapter, I will embark upon a key discussion pertaining to the contemporary debate around gender theory that foregrounds the rest of this thesis with the necessary analytical and conceptual tools by which to engage gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the ancient Mediterranean context. Gender is a very central and pivotal identity for us as human beings. According to one leading strand of gender theory men and women should have the same “status, rights, possibilities and duties” (Økland 2004:40). This egalitarian ideology presupposes modern discourses of democracy and personal autonomy, and has led to the general belief that one’s gender identity is culturally dependent and more or less coincidental (Økland 2004:40, 52). This suggests, as has been noted above concerning contemporary identity theory, that gendered identity is a social construction that varies over time and across cultures. Gender identity, therefore, is fluid and dynamic and could give rise to a plethora of possible gendered identities.

Since its incorporation into the field of sociology in the early 1970s the concept of gender has become an important and hotly contested topic (Jackson and Scott 2002:1). The emergence of feminism in the 1970s led to the questioning of the androcentric view of the world which has existed in most cultures for as long as we can determine. It was crucial to the feminist project to respond to the essentialist postulation that existing gender differences between women and men were natural (Jackson and Scott 2002:1). The concept of gender

was redefined “to emphasize the social construction of masculinity and femininity and the social ordering of the relations between women and men” (Jackson and Scott 2002:1).<sup>49</sup> Gender was viewed as a dynamic social construct and not a direct derivative of biological sex. It should be noted that gender is always intersectional and is influenced by other factors such as race, class, age, religion, social relations, sexual preference, culture, and ethnicity (de Lauretis 1986:14; Schüssler Fiorenza 2007:159).<sup>50</sup>

Although this conception of gender correctly pointed to the socio-cultural construction of gender, it still, presupposed that sex was dependent upon fixed and “natural” anatomical and physiological characteristics (Jackson and Scott 2002:15).<sup>51</sup> The presumption supporting the sex/gender differentiation has progressively been interrogated by feminist scholars such as Butler (1990; 2002) and sociologists as may be seen in the work of Jackson and Scott (2002). Current scholarship argues that the differentiation between sex and gender did not go far enough and has led to the investigation of both categories, sex and gender, as socio-cultural constructions (Jackson and Scott 2002:15).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>For a brief, but insightful discussion tracing how the concept of gender has developed within sociological theory from the prehistory of gender, that is, prior to 1970, up until the present time see Jackson and Scott (2002:2–23). For further discussion of gender theory and an understanding of gender as the product of the social, cultural and psychological aspects obtained through the process of becoming a man or a woman in a specific society at a certain time, also see Stoller (1968) and Oakley (1972).

<sup>50</sup>Crenshaw (2011:25–42) first coined the term intersectionality within the context of critical legal studies and its specific interrogation of the plight and exclusion of “black women” whose “identity fixedness” as simultaneously black and women disqualified them from legal remedies. Since then this expression has been bolstered and may also be viewed as a critical analytical tool, a “thinking technology” (Lykke 2011:207–220) that subverts any binary notion of domination and zooms in on the multiplicity and interdependence of social factors that participate in creating and sustaining power relations that function as discourses in the making of normativities, identities and social relations (Crenshaw 2011:221–233; Yuval-Davis 2011:155–169, 159, n.2).

<sup>51</sup>Sex, in this instance refers to the “biological aspects of a person such as the chromosomal, anatomical, hormonal, and physiological” structures. “It is an ascribed status in that a person is assigned to one sex or the other at birth” (Richardson 1981:5).

<sup>52</sup>The basis for this kind of investigation may be traced back to the case study of Agnes, a male-to-female transsexual, conducted by Garfinkel (1967). In this study Garfinkel called biological sex into question as an essentialist feature of human experience and treated one’s gender as an achievement or performance by the individual. This performance, however, is also based upon a deciphering of that performance by others which gives approval to one’s gender representation. According to West and Zimmerman (2002:43) the case of Agnes demonstrates what culture has concealed, namely, “the accomplishment of gender”. Also see Butler (1990:7) and her discussion of gender as “performative”. For further discussion also see Jackson and Scott (2002:16) and West and Zimmerman (2002:43–47).

#### 4. Sex and Gender as Socio-Cultural Constructions

In this section I will examine briefly some of the main factors that inform the investigation of sex and gender as socio-culturally constructed concepts.<sup>53</sup> Butler (1990:7) argues that the concept of sex is as culturally constructed as gender. She states,

Gender ought not to be constructed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow: rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*.<sup>54</sup> The effect of gender is produced through a stylization of the body and, hence must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self (Butler 1990:179).

She asserts further that if sex, as well as gender, are constructions of society, “It follows that the body does not have a pre-given essential sex. Rather bodies are rendered intelligible through gender and cannot be said to have a signifiable existence prior to the continual performance of gender. Hence gender, rather than being part of our inner essence, is performative” (Butler 1990:7).<sup>55</sup> This implies that for one to be feminine or masculine, is equivalent to “performing” (Butler 1990) or “doing” (West and Zimmerman 2002:42) what society institutes as the acceptable behaviour for femininity(ies) and masculinity(ies).

Butler (1993, ix) mentions that gender as a performative construction, or better yet a series of performative constructions, does not imply a “willful and instrumental subject” or that gender is something one puts on like an item of clothing and is, therefore, not something  
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<sup>53</sup>Medical science has also validated the socio-cultural construction of sex and gender. Stanley, Jackson and Scott (2002:35) mention that “[f]or the last fifteen years or so medical cytogenetics textbooks too have made it perfectly clear that for these natural scientists ‘gender’, social sex and psychological sex, are all entirely matters of upbringing” (Cytogenetics refers to the research into the structure of cells).

<sup>54</sup>Her emphasis.

<sup>55</sup>In a later publication Butler (1993) turns to a notion of “performativity” derived from linguistics to replace her previous notion of performance. For further discussion see Butler (1993:ix, xi, xxi).



we choose, but rather, suggests that the subject is “constituted” and “(re)constituted” through repetition and that subjects construct and (re)construct identities in the very memory of that construction. “[T]here is no subject who decides on its gender”; in fact, “gender is part of what decides the subject” (Butler 1993:ix). According to Butler (1993, xii) gender performativity is not a single or intentional act, but instead it is the repetitive citation of societies norms and conventions “by which discourse produces the effects that it names”. Performativity should not be regarded as “the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names, but rather, as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains” (Butler 1993, xii).

A central means through which Butler (1990) explains this is through her analysis of drag. Kessler and McKenna (1978) see gender construction(s) as an interactive procedure involving both a performance of gender and an evaluation of that performance. According to Jackson and Scott (2002:17) where Kessler and McKenna (1978) go beyond Butler (1990; 1993) is in signifying that the manner of performance is based on the structure of androcentrism.<sup>56</sup> Gender, therefore, represents an asymmetrical hierarchical separation between women and men rooted in both social institutions and social practices. Gender, seen as a “social structural phenomenon” is also cultivated and “sustained at the level of everyday interaction” and shapes individual identities (Jackson and Scott 2002:1–2). Gender then is not an intrinsic possession of individuals; it is an intrinsic and structural property of society (Davies 2002:283; Schüssler Fiorenza 2007:160). Although from a different angle, the theory of the *habitus* by Bourdieu (1990:52) can also be appropriated, as society perpetuates a gendered status quo through a system of “structured, structuring dispositions” and *habitus* generates and navigates the bodiliness of people which in turn enables replicated structuring of gender that came into being as the product of reiteration.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>For further discussion of the work of Kessler and McKenna (1978), see (Jackson and Scott 2002:17).

<sup>57</sup>For further discussion of the notion of bodiliness see Csordas (1994:1–26). For further discussion of the notion of “bodiliness”. Also see Butler (1993, ix) and her assertion that bodies move and in this movement traverse “boundaries and move boundaries and gives rise to malleable ‘performative’ subjects” in our contemporary context.

Although this new wave of investigation facilitates a more accurate social assessment of the distinction between women and men and confronts the logic of a natural binary divide between males and females, it nevertheless presupposes a binary, androcentric and heteronormative conceptualisation of sex and gender. As a construction, performed to be binary, this conceptualisation of sex and gender threatens to banish to the periphery or exclude all “other” sex and gender constructions, for example, homosexuality, bisexuality, intersexuality and transsexuality. Heteronormativity refers to the view that “institutionalized heterosexuality constitutes the standard for legitimate and prescriptive arrangements”, an assumption that has led many scholars to question mainstream epistemologies of gender and sexuality and to call for a reexamination of such understandings (Ingraham 2002:79).<sup>58</sup>

Connell (2002:60) is one such scholar. He has introduced the notion of “hegemonic masculinity” and “emphasised femininity” in an effort to highlight the plurality of constructions of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) and also to stress the existence of culturally dominant forms of gender constructions. In the concept of hegemonic masculinity, “hegemony” refers to, “a social ascendancy” accomplished through the “organisation of private life and cultural processes” whereby one group claims and sustains a leading position in social relationships over other groups (Connell 2002:60).<sup>59</sup> Connell (2002:60) clarifies that hegemony does not mean absolute cultural dominance or the extinction of alternatives. Ingraham (2002:80) goes even further with his assessment of gender construction coining the phrase “heterogender”. Heterogender, “is the asymmetrical stratification of the sexes in relation to the historically varying institutions of patriarchal heterosexuality” (Ingraham 2002:80). He

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<sup>58</sup>Cf. Krondorfer (2010:4). Farley (2008:151–152) notes, “Cross-cultural anthropological studies have led some scholars . . . to identify what they call a ‘third sex’ . . . Gender for a third sex is not one (man or woman), and not always two (intersexed man and woman), but more often neither woman or man”. For further discussion of other possibilities for gendering see Farley (2008:152–156).

<sup>59</sup>Connell (2002:60) borrows the notion of ascendancy from Gramsci (1978), as in his analysis of class relations in Italy. Similar to this notion of hegemonic masculinity is the concept developed by Ingraham (2002:79), namely, the “heterosexual imaginary”. This concept also confronts the assumptions of gender construction and “explores the ways in which gender hierarchy interconnects with the institutionalization of heterosexuality” (Ingraham 2002:79). Also see Wittig (1991) and Jeffreys (1998) who argue that gender constructs conceptualised as though gender represents a binary division between men and women empowers heterosexuality.

claims that this term “confronts the equation of heterosexuality with the *natural* and of gender with the cultural, and suggests that both are socially constructed, open to other configurations (not only opposites and binary), and open to change” (Ingraham 2002:80).<sup>60</sup>

It should be made clear here that there is a “surrenderedness” to the vocabularies we have, the performed gendered strategies at work in contemporary society but that does not necessarily imply using those as point of departure. Butler (1993:xxiii, xix, 6) has very clearly indicated that we are implicated in the very structures that we wish to subvert but that “implicatedness” is so powerful that we are to an extent not even able to resist, oppose or counter, but can only “subvert”, that is, “turn under”, an undermining, or a re-signification. Vorster (2014:27–28) puts it adeptly when he states, “How is subversion at all possible when we are in any case already implicated in the very normativities we criticise?”

This shift of focus from gender to “heterogenders” (Ingraham 2002:80) as the main element of analysis, displays how heteronormative propositions structures culture and society, which in turn structures perceptions and notions of sex and gender. It seems that because sex and gender are socio-culturally constructed, and society itself is structured upon heteronormative foundations, that the asymmetry of gender will continue to privilege those who “do” or “practice” heteronormativity, which will in turn perpetuate hetero-patriarchal institutions and the naturalisation of heterosexuality for as long as those ideologies structure society, unless of course it is subverted. The discussion of contemporary gender theory still appears to be hotly debated, and as Davies (2002:283) mentions, it thus remains open for new developments and new forms of discourse.

## Conclusion

Because the main focus for investigating contemporary issues surrounding gender theory is aimed at informing and foregrounding my investigation of ancient Mediterranean gender theory, I have kept my discussion concise, with the main emphasis being on -----

<sup>60</sup>His emphasis.

highlighting the social construction of the concepts of sex and gender.<sup>61</sup> At this stage it is perhaps necessary to clarify the link between SRI as a central research analytics employed in this thesis and how it fits in with the above-mentioned discussions of both identity and gender. It is my contention that SRI will aid me in addressing the gendered problematics of 1 Corinthians by allowing me to wrestle with the discursivity of Paul's discourse.

SRI as developed by Robbins (1996a:18; 1996b:2) and others provides me with the necessary analytical tools to make explicit the gendered "tapestry" of early Christian discourse. One would be inclined to see in this articulation also the texturing and layering of social systems including both gender and identity constructions and in light of this SRI provides the needed analytical link to make explicit these social tapestries. One way that this can be seen is in the articulation of rhetography which argues that texts create graphic images that implies a particular construction of reality (Robbins 2009:xxvii). In my investigation of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in 1 Corinthians it will be demonstrated that the rhetographic imagery that emerges in the text are also highly gendered imagery that script and structure engendering. SRI will aid me to make explicit those gendered structurings and machinations, and in the process, unearthing an array of interpretive nuances and possibilities.

With the insights gained from the above discussion, in chapter three of this thesis I will embark upon a discussion of the ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s) focusing on the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) within the gendered context of this epoch. Before I do this, however, I will first provide a brief literature review of gender studies on 1 Corinthians to show why it is necessary to explore gender construction(s) and representation(s) in this text.

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<sup>61</sup>For further discussion of sex and gender as socio-cultural formulations see Butler (1990); Frese and Coggeshal (1991); Arnot (2002); and Jackson and Scott (2002).

## **Chapter 2:**

### **A Literature Review of Gender Studies on 1 Corinthians**

#### **Introduction**

The First Letter to the Corinthians has provided a fertile soil for scholars interested in the study of gender in Paul and more generally early Christianity. This chapter aims to provide a literature review of contemporary gender studies on 1 Corinthians.<sup>1</sup> First and foremost I will discuss the literature that has dominated the study of gender in 1 Corinthians, but I also intend to use this chapter as a means to introduce my discussion of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1. Gender Shape Shifting and its Impact Upon 1 Corinthians**

As mentioned in chapter one of this thesis there have been considerable development in the study of sex and gender theory that has led to new advances in this field. Although this new wave of investigation facilitates a more accurate social assessment of the distinction between women and men and confronts the logic of a natural binary divide between males and females, it, nevertheless, presupposes a binary, androcentric and heteronormative conceptualisation of sex and gender, and threatens to banish to the periphery or exclude all “other” sex and gender constructions. This heteronormative assumption has led many

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<sup>1</sup>The analysis which follows does not offer an exhaustive review of the scholarly literature dedicated to the discussion of gender in 1 Corinthians. Instead, and more relevant given the nature of this thesis, this chapter provides a overview of some of the leading discussions pertaining to this emerging field of study.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote 3 of chapter one of this thesis for clarification regarding the bracketed “s”.

scholars to question mainstream epistemologies of gender and sexuality and to call for a reexamination of such understandings.<sup>3</sup>

These shifts in modern gender awareness and gender theory have significantly impacted upon and changed the face of New Testament studies in general, and Pauline studies in particular, especially since the advent of feminist criticism in the early 1970s (Wire 1990b, 220–223; Ehrensperger 2004, 1).<sup>4</sup> As women gradually started functioning as theologians, pastors, and biblical scholars, the argument about the role of women in the Christian Canon and in the church proliferated in significance (Ackermann 1994; 1998; Dreyer 2002). Certain passages within 1 Corinthians have frequently been isolated as contentious, namely, 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, and have been analysed with an analytical lens that seeks to discuss and reconstruct the role of women in early Christianity (Baumert 1996, 174–182; Crocker 2004, 4, 148; Ehrensperger 2004, 2). Scholars have indicated that generally the inquiry into these gender texts has concentrated on either their content or their context (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 214; Conway 2008, 8–11). Crucial in the analysis of their content has been the focus upon interpreting the arguments Paul presents, assessing them with regards to their possible effect on women, and in particular, their effect on the relationship between women and men. Analysis of the context of these texts has in turn focused upon reconstructing the rhetorical situation in Corinth with an emphasis upon understanding Paul’s argument (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 214).

Ranging from exegetical studies, to socio-historical studies, to feminist studies, if we assess the history of biblical scholarship on 1 Corinthians, considering the plethora of papers, monographs and books written upon the various issues regarding women in 1 Corinthians, we soon discover that in one way or another, most of these studies are aimed at a reconstruction

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<sup>3</sup>See pages 26-29 above for a more in depth discussion that articulates further developments of mainstream epistemologies of gender and sexuality and the reexamination of heteronormative constructions of gender. For an interesting discussion that seeks to subvert many of the essentialist notions regarding gender identity see Cornwall, Harrison & Whitehead (2008, 1–19).

<sup>4</sup>Among many others, also see Scroggs (1983); Hays (1986, 184–215); Countryman (1988); D’Angelo (1990, 141–161); Martin (1995a, 332–355); and Horsley (2000b, 1–16) for further discussion.

of “historical women” and their roles within early Christianity (May 2004; Mount 2005, 313–340).<sup>5</sup> There have been numerous attempts by scholars to interpret the highly contentious gendered texts of 1 Corinthians (Wire 1990b; Martin 2004).<sup>6</sup> Most scholars in their quest to analyse these texts have opted to focus upon analysing either 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16 or 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. To date no scholarly agreement can be found on these passages, and instead, the field of New Testament studies is littered with many different and often contradictory interpretations (Thiselton 2000, 800–838, 1150–1162; Paige 2002, 217–220). One thing remains apparent, though, and that is that the discussion of gender in 1 Corinthians is still open for debate and consideration.

## **2. A Dialogical Juxtaposing of Gender Discourse**

From the literature reviewed for this chapter it appears that the discourse of gender studies on 1 Corinthians has been situated in a dialogical framework that juxtaposes studies of femininity and masculinity. In fact, most of the work surveyed for this chapter has in one

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<sup>5</sup>These studies are premised upon a notion of the “material irreducibility of sex” and suggest a stable subject (Butler 1993, 11). Contemporary gender critics, however, argue for the deconstruction of the term “woman” or “women” (and in the same vein the polar opposite “man” or “men”) and suggest that there is no homogenous, stable subject (Butler 1993, x). Any search for a stable subject such as “women”, therefore, is doomed to fail in light of this gender-critical theory.

<sup>6</sup>Also see Hooker (1963, 410–416); Schüssler Fiorenza (1987, 386–394; 2007, 98–106); Walker (1989, 75–88); Grudem (1991, 425–468); BeDuhn (1999, 295–320) to mention just a few of the attempts by biblical scholars to interpret the gendered texts in 1 Corinthians.

way or another focused on exegetical reconstructions dealing with feminist or womenist studies that seek to reconstruct the role and importance of women within scripture (Ehrensperger 2004, 19–42, 95–120; Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 214–215).<sup>7</sup> Another aspect that has been emphasised in the literature surveyed for this chapter, is the evaluation of Paul’s arguments, analysing them with regard to their implications for women, and more specifically whether or not Paul’s arguments solicit a hierarchical or an egalitarian outlook of the relationship between women and men (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 214).

Økland (2004, 3) rightly mentions that in much feminist and “malestream” scholarship on Paul, and in particular on 1 Corinthians, the focus has been on Paul’s view of women or what she terms the “quest for ‘Paul’s view of women’”.<sup>8</sup> Økland (2004, 3) mentions further that such an emphasis on women studies “will probably never succeed if we expect to find a unified view of women in his [Paul’s] phallogocentric texts”.<sup>9</sup> In fact Butler

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<sup>7</sup>This is understandable in light of the fact that so much was in the past presented from a male perspective that left women completely out of the picture or simply replicated the views of the text. Black women discovered that their agenda was not adequately represented by feminist theology, and as a result they developed womenist theology (Keane 1998, 125). This phenomenon started in North America among black American women who “did not feature prominently in the white middle class feminist agenda” (Keane 1998, 131). For further discussion and for more insight about the origins of womenist theology see Walker (1983, xi-xii); Plaskow (1989, 179–186); Baker-Fletcher (1995, 183–196); Grant (1995, 1); and Martin (1995, 5–24). For a brief explication of African women’s theology and hermeneutics see Phiri (1997, 16; 2000, 145–160); Ackermann (1998, 349–357); Landman (1998, 137–140); Oduyoye (1998, 359–370); and Dube & Kanyoro (2004). Owing to the intercultural and multivocal nature of feminist biblical discourses which takes into account the plurality of women’s experiences there has been a proliferation of various strands of feminist theologies and hermeneutics in the past thirty years or so. My aim in this chapter is not to give a history of the advent of feminist biblical inquiry, however, but rather to offer a literature review of gender studies on 1 Corinthians. For a helpful guide to the breadth of feminist biblical scholarship and a discussion that highlights the current changes and different strands of biblical feminisms that have developed within the last thirty years, see Isasi-Díaz (1994, 88–104); Schüssler Fiorenza (2001, 135–164, 183–186); Deifelt (2003, 237–248); Dube (2003, 54–72); Horsley (2003, 297–317); Matthews, Kittredge & Johnson-DeBaufre (2003, 1–14); Ehrensperger (2004, 19–42, 95–120); Tamez (2006); Hunt (2007, 79–92). Two strands of current biblical feminisms deserve to be noted due to their impact upon feminist theology, namely, postcolonial feminism and ecofeminism. For further discussion of postcolonial feminism, see Donaldson (1996); Dube (2000); Donaldson & Pui-lan (2002); Sugirtharajah (2003, 133–140); Dube & Kanyoro (2004; 2004); Pui-lan (2005); Schüssler Fiorenza (2007, 113–129); Marchal (2008, 15–36); Punt (2008, 261–290; 2013a, 373–398). For further discussion of ecofeminism, see Gebara (2003, 249–268); Ruether (2005, 91–129); and Tucker (2007, 129–138).

<sup>8</sup>Schüssler Fiorenza (2000, 42) has adopted the expression “malestream” from feminist theorists as a descriptive term, “since most of our cultural and religious texts, traditions, and institutions have been and are still determined by elite (white) men”. Also See Schüssler Fiorenza (1984a; 1985). For other contemporary scholars who also use this neologism, see, Horsley (2000b, 7–9); Hewitt (2003, 454) and Ehrensperger (2004, 2).

<sup>9</sup>My emphasis. This assertion by Økland (2004, 3) coheres with current scholarship which maintains that gender categories are not homogeneous (Jackson and Scott 2002b, 21; Cornwall, et al. 2008, 14).



(1993, ix) has shown that bodies move across boundaries and move boundaries and gives rise to malleable “performative” subjects. This notion of an unstable, boundary-deviant subject contests the notion that many early feminist scholars suggested by their persistent pursuit of a stable, historical and somewhat pristine womanliness by their quest for the historical woman as if a homogenous construction of womanliness could be uncovered.<sup>10</sup>

Studies that deal with issues of gender in 1 Corinthians may generally be classified under five main categories. These studies are often not presented as gender studies owing to the fact that only recently have gender-critical studies been incorporated into New Testament biblical studies (Vander Stichele and Penner 2005a, 287–310; Vander Stichele and Penner 2005b, 1–30). Moore (2001, 12–13) notes,

Gender studies should not be confused with feminist studies. Gender studies does encompass feminist theory and criticism, and women’s studies generally, but it also encompasses men’s studies or, as it is less commonly (but more aptly) termed, masculinity studies. . . . The (unisex) umbrella term “gender studies” also offers shelter to lesbian and gay studies, and its obstreperous offshoot, queer theory—or so it is often assumed.<sup>11</sup>

Most studies that deal with gender issues in 1 Corinthians have approached the discourse from a feminist-reconstructive perspective. In these instances only the particularities suggested by the text itself are treated as objects of analysis, with no real interest to what also lies between the lines. It would seem that often the fixed category “woman” has obscured further investigations of engendered relations of power. These studies

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<sup>10</sup>Scholars like Butler (1993, 4) have called into question the notion of sex as an a priori and not also a cultural construction such as gender. It should be mentioned, however, “the category of women does not become useless through deconstruction, but becomes one whose uses are no longer reified as ‘referents,’ and which stand a chance of being opened up, indeed, of coming to signify in ways that none of us can predict in advance. Surely, it must be possible both to use the term, to use it tactically even as one is, as it were, used and positioned by it, and also to subject the term to a critique which interrogates the exclusionary operations and differential power-relations that construct and delimit feminist invocations of ‘women’” (Butler 1993, 5). To deconstruct the term “women” is not, therefore, to do away with the term as useful according to Butler (1993, 5).

<sup>11</sup>For further discussion of queer theory and queer theologies see Goss (2009, 137–145); Schneider (2009, 63–76); and Punt (2010, 140–166).

may be categorised in the following manner. First, some scholars have opted to interpret the gendered passages of 1 Corinthians, as non-Pauline interpolations (Weiss 1977, 342)<sup>12</sup>. Such studies often maintain that the texts embody an understanding of women incongruous with Paul's own views concerning women (Murphy-O'Connor 1976, 615–621; Fee 1987, 697–705).<sup>13</sup>

Second, studies on gender in 1 Corinthians have often been devoted to particular topics that deal with gender issues. The topics that are usually investigated are head coverings (Engberg-Pedersen 1991, 679–689; Thiselton 2000, 800–828; Martin 2004, 75–84),<sup>14</sup> the silencing of women (Baumert 1996, 195–198; Arichea 2004, 460–469), and women prophesying (Wire 1990b, 1, 63–67, 181–192; Arichea 2004, 465). All three are related to the problem of women's subordination to men and arise from the study of 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 and 14:34–35.<sup>15</sup> This type of investigation usually takes the form of exegetical analysis of

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<sup>12</sup>For further discussion also see Barrett (1968, 330, 332–333) who mentions other scholars who follow this path of investigation. Cf. Conzelmann (1975, 246); Fee (1987, 705); Thiselton (2000, 1150).

<sup>13</sup>For further discussion also see Murphy-O'Connor (1988, 265–274); Wire (1990b, 149–152, 229–232); Witherington (1995, 288); Arichea (2004, 460–462); Crocker (2004, 153, n. 125, 157–162); Crossan (2004, 70–123); Økland (2004, 149–151); and Mount (2005, 313–340).

<sup>14</sup>For further discussion also see Hooker (1963, 410–416); Murphy-O'Connor (1988, 265–274); Thompson (1988, 99–115); Wire (1990b, 220–223); Grudem (1991, 425–468); Jervis (1993, 231–246); Martin (1995b, 229–249); Witherington (1995, 232–240); Baumert (1996, 182–194); BeDuhn (1999, 297–308); Winter (2003, 77–96); Crocker (2004, 153); Loader (2004, 99–104); Merkle (2006, 527–548), and Lakay (2010, 6–36). Murphy-O'Connor (1988, 265–274; 1980, 483), in his analysis offers an exegesis of 1 Cor. 11:2–16. His investigation differs from other similar exegetical analyses in that it takes into account both women and men as opposed to focusing solely upon women in the passage with men merely being dismissed as “a background in contrast with which woman's situation and obligation can be more sharply described” (Murphy-O'Connor 1988, 266). Murphy-O'Connor (1980) argues that the problem in Corinth that Paul is addressing in 1 Cor. 11:2–16 involves both men and women and that the issue was how they dressed their hair. His interpretation purports that “head” should be interpreted as “source” in 1 Cor. 11:3 and maintains that the issue of men's hair/dress was just as much a problem in the church as women's. Also see Thiselton (2000, 805) who follows Murphy-O'Connor (1980) in asserting that Paul is addressing not only the way women were dressing, but also the way men were dressing.

<sup>15</sup>Even under these broad topical headings scholars differ tremendously on interpretation. An example of this can be found in the interpretation of 1 Cor. 11:2–16 and whether or not Paul is addressing married women or women in general. Cf. Hayter (1987); BeDuhn (1999, 295–320); Paige (2002, 217–242); Winter (2003, 77–96). On the topic of head covering in 1 Corinthians 11 scholars are divided as to what is being referred to when Paul states that women should cover their heads. Some scholars postulate that the women's hair itself was the covering and, therefore, that women should not wear their hair loose during worship gatherings (Baumert 1996, 183, 186; Cossgrove 2005, 675–692). Still, other scholars maintain that Paul is referring to a veil of some kind that women should wear (Witherington 1995, 233; Arichea 2004, 462–464). Also see Martin (2004) who argues that a woman's unbound hair was synonymous with her genitalia according to ancient conceptions of physiognomy.

certain gendered texts within the discourse of 1 Corinthians 11 and 14. In recent years the field of New Testament studies has been bombarded with many such studies, dealing with the same texts investigated from different methodological vantage points, or using the same methodology with diverse and often contradictory results (Engberg-Pedersen 1991, 679; Cosgrove 2005, 675–692).

Third, studies on gender in 1 Corinthians have often focused on the study of women in early Christianity and in antiquity more broadly. Such studies deal primarily with reconstructing, by means of ancient sources, the role and status of women within the period of early Christianity, focusing on issues such as women leadership within early Christianity and more broadly on their leadership within antiquity in general (Kraemer and D’Angelo 1999; Osiek and Madigan 2005; Osiek, MacDonald and Tulloch 2006).<sup>16</sup>

Fourth, another less prominent view for understanding the gender passages of 1 Corinthians has been to suggest that the passages contain the opinions of the Corinthian Christians themselves, and not the views of Paul. According to this hypothesis, Paul mentions the opinions of the Corinthian Christians in the gendered passages of 1 Corinthians, not because he agrees with them, but rather because he wants to refute them (Walker 1975, 94–110; Trompf 1980, 196–215).<sup>17</sup>

Fifth, a handful of scholars have analysed 1 Corinthians with an emphasis upon the “male issue” (Oster 1988, 481–505), or rather, with an emphasis upon investigating men in 1 Corinthians (Murphy-O’Connor 1980, 483; 1988, 265–274).<sup>18</sup> Only very recently have some

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<sup>16</sup>For a discussion of women in early Christianity, also see Brooten (1982); Witherington (1992); Torjesen (1993); Kloppenborg (1996); MacDonald (1996); Osiek & Balch (2003); Taylor (2003); Winter (2003); Crocker (2004).

<sup>17</sup>For further discussion see Odell-Scott (1983, 90–93; 1991, 179–183); Walker (1983, 101–112); and Paige (2002, 219).

<sup>18</sup>Oster (1988, 481–505) in his work has emphasised the “male issue” in 1 Corinthians 11:3–16.

New Testament studies on 1 Corinthians emerged with a keen interest in the issue of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians using gender-critical approaches (Moore 1996; Anderson, Moore and Kim 2003, 36–37; Mayordomo 2008, 99–115).<sup>19</sup>

### **3. Grappling with Gender Construction(s) and Representation(s) in 1 Corinthians**

As noted above, many scholars have undertaken exegetical studies of certain problematic gender texts in 1 Corinthians. This has given rise to copious amounts of scholarly work in the form of journal articles and books emphasising the subject of “women”. With the advent of the women’s liberation movement and its impact upon theology in the early 1970’s, and the emergence of feminist interpretations in biblical studies, even more work began to spring up with a primary focus upon re-constructing women’s identities, in scripture and the role of women in the ancient world (Daly 1968; Ruether 1974).<sup>20</sup> The dominant hermeneutical framework posited under the feminist wave of scholarship was a “hermeneutics of suspicion” (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984a; Gebara 2003, 250).<sup>21</sup> One of the pioneering scholars, supporting this tradition of feminist hermeneutics, is Schüssler Fiorenza (2000),<sup>22</sup> who combines historical criticism with a rhetorical hermeneutics of suspicion in her

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<sup>19</sup>Cf. Conway (2008, 8–11); Marchal (2014, 93–113). A gender-critical approach takes seriously the argumentative nature of rhetoric and focuses upon issues such as gender construction and identity within a text (Økland 2004, 1–5; Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 217–219; Vander Stichele and Penner 2009, 4–7, 25). Most New Testament studies on masculinity have focused upon masculinity in the Gospels, as may be seen in the bibliography on New Testament masculinity studies provided by Anderson, Moore & Kim (2003, 23–42). Cf. Martin (2006); Krondorfer (2009a, 184–186). For a discussion which is focused upon uncovering the masculinity of Paul in 1 Corinthian see Clines (2003, 181–192). Similarly for a discussion of Paul’s masculinity with regards to 2 Corinthians, see Harrill (2001, 189–213); Larson (2004, 85–97). Also see the study by Kahl (2000, 37–49) which focusses on masculinity in Galatians 3:28. Across the humanities and social sciences, the writings on masculinity(ies) are already enormous; for bibliography on ancient and contemporary masculinities, see, among many others, Gilmore (1990); Boyd (2009, 51–55); Boyarin (2009, 79–95); and Krondorfer (2009b, 421–436; 2010).

<sup>20</sup>Also see Daly (1973). For further discussion that gives a brief history of the emergence of feminist biblical inquiry and contemporary advances in this field, see Castelli (1994, 73–98); Segovia (2003b, 1–32) among others.

<sup>21</sup>For further discussion of this hermeneutical framework see Schüssler Fiorenza (2001, 175–177).

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Robbins (2002c, 112).

approach to biblical studies.<sup>23</sup> This method of interpretation has been applied to biblical texts in an effort to reveal the concealed and muted history of women in patriarchal and “kyriarchal” texts (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984a; 1984b).<sup>24</sup> Feminist scholars have, therefore, refined the dominant theological matters from a feminist vantage point in order to progress to a theology that would buttress the liberation of women (Ehrensperger 2004, 21).

Instead of situating this thesis within an analytical sphere that places two gender constructs, namely, “masculinity” and “femininity”, at logger heads with one another, or attempting to analyse these two gender constructs in isolation from each other, I will attempt to focus upon both gendered constructs. It must be stated, however, as recent scholarship has fittingly demonstrated, that the construction of gender identity may no longer be viewed as binary constructions positioned in a way that favours heteronormativity. But rather, it should be understood that gender identity(ies) and gender construction(s), are dynamic social phenomena that may give rise to a plethora of different gendered identities and constructions that are not aligned to heteronormative biases (Butler 1990; 2002; Barker 2002). For the purpose of this thesis, however, I will proceed with an understanding of gender that runs congruently with the ideology of patriarchy/kyriarchy simply because ancient gender constructions were predominantly represented in this androcentric manner.<sup>25</sup>

Although the above-mentioned studies have been highly informative and much needed, it seems that this reconstructive hermeneutics has become the hegemonic framework for investigation of gender in 1 Corinthians. It does not seem appropriate to undertake yet another study that solely focuses on women in 1 Corinthians. Such studies have focused primarily upon women and women related issues and have failed to consider that discourse itself is gendered in light of the ancient Mediterranean concepts of gender (Okland 2004; Conway 2008). These studies have, therefore, failed to investigate how gender is constructed by the discourse itself. In fact, currently, most research pertaining to gender and 1

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<sup>23</sup>For a careful articulation of the methodology used by Schüssler Fiorenza and a brief discussion of her scholarship, see, Schüssler Fiorenza (1985, 55–63); Matthews, Kittredge & Johnson-DeBaufre (2003, 1–14).

<sup>24</sup>Cf. footnote 13 of chapter one of this thesis for a definition of this term.

<sup>25</sup>For a discussion of ancient gender constructions see chapter three of this thesis.

Corinthians focuses primarily upon the study of women. Schüssler Fiorenza (2001, 5) observes,

Malestream historical criticism, so also ideology criticism as well as postcolonial and cultural biblical criticism have for the most part not made wo/men subjects of interpretation, connected intellectuals, or historical agents central to their theoretical frameworks. Neither have they sufficiently recognized the importance of gender analysis for biblical studies or developed an ethics of interpretation that always takes wo/men's experience into account when analyzing social location and the operations of power within discourse.

I disagree partly with her assertion and contend that feminist biblical studies for the most part have made “woman” the subject of interpretation but have not sufficiently concentrated on and recognised the importance of gender analysis, that takes gender as a serious analytic category for biblical studies (Boyd 2009, 53; Krondorfer 2009, xii). None of the studies reviewed in the purview of this chapter have focused upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of male and female gender identity(ies) in 1 Corinthians. These types of analyses presuppose gender construction(s) and representation(s) or rather, gendered issues, but instead of grappling with these phenomena in particular, they analyse the results or symptoms of Paul's gender construction(s) and not his actual construction(s) and representation(s) of gender. The discussion of 1 Corinthians along such investigative lines of inquiry has obscured seeing the discourse of 1 Corinthians as persuasive rhetoric that constructs and enforces certain gendered identities. Using SRI together with a gender-critical cultural analysis, I intend to investigate how Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians constructs and conceptualizes gender, as opposed to analyzing a symptom of gender construction(s) and identity(ies) as many previous studies have done. My focus in this thesis will be upon how the discourse of 1 Corinthians constructs and represents masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies). This subject will be investigated in chapters four through six.

As mentioned earlier, within the framework of New Testament studies, the study of gender is relatively new in comparison to other fields of study such as Classical studies

(Pomeroy 1975; Moore and Anderson 1998, 249–251).<sup>26</sup> In the last twenty-five years Classical studies scholars have focused considerable attention on the construction(s) of gender in ancient Greek and Roman antiquity (Gleason 1990, 389–416; Winkler 1990b). This type of research has led to key questions concerning the conceptualisation of femininity(ies) and masculinity(ies) during this period (Halperin 1990, 135–170; Satlow 1994, 1–25). Despite the research within Classic Studies concerned with femininities and masculinities, these have not emerged within New Testament scholarship. New Testament scholars have been rather tardy in their application of gender-critical studies to the analysis of biblical texts (Glancy 1994, 34–50; 2004, 99–135; Larson 2004, 85–97). Besides, applying classical gender-critical knowledge to investigate socio-cultural aspects that inform their analyses of ancient Mediterranean culture, not many New Testament scholars have applied gender theory and gender-critical analysis to their investigations of biblical texts (Moore 2001; Clines 2003, 181–192).<sup>27</sup> And, only a handful of New Testament scholars have used gender theory and gender-critical approaches to investigate 1 Corinthians (Økland 2004, 6–38, 168–223; Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 214–237; Lakey 2010, 97–135, 136–179)<sup>28</sup>.

#### **4. Gender-Critical Approaches to Investigate 1 Corinthians**

Although previous studies on the gendered texts of 1 Corinthians have been located in a dialogical framework that juxtaposes the study of femininity and masculinity with each other, most of the scholarly attention of this type of research has concentrated on “femininity”, and by this I mean works directed towards feminist or womenist studies. Some New Testament biblical scholars have recently demonstrated the benefits of shifting the focus of analysis from arguments and analyses based largely, if not solely, upon reconstruction of

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<sup>26</sup>Pomeroy (1975) was one of the first classical scholars to do work on women in antiquity. Moore and Anderson (1998, 249) note that “[h]er work was the first full-length study of this generation to take the question of women in antiquity seriously”.

<sup>27</sup>Also see, Stowers (1994, 42–82); Martin (1995a, 332–355); Dube (2003, 54–72); Vander Stichele (2005b; 2005a); Marchal (2008; 2014, 93–113); Thurman (2007, 185–230); and DeBaufre and Nasrallah (2011, 161–174).

<sup>28</sup>Cf. Ivarsson (2007, 163–184); Bird (2011, 177, 180, 181); Marchal (2014, 93–113).

socio-historical circumstances, to gender-critical approaches that take seriously the argumentative nature of rhetoric and explore issues such as gender construction(s) and identity(ies) (Moore 1996; Kittredge 2000, 103–109).<sup>29</sup> The latter of the two approaches places emphasis upon the discourse itself and seeks to understand the discourse as argument aimed at persuasion as opposed to placing emphasis upon the subjects of the rhetorical argument such as veiling, women tongue speakers, prophecy, and women in general, as has been the norm for much too long within biblical Studies. From this rhetorical vantage point Paul is identified as a rhetorician engaged in the art of persuasion as opposed to one writing authoritatively as a messenger of God. If one sees Paul as the latter, one runs the risk of seeing Paul’s words as authoritative without taking into account that the discourse is a rhetorical construction, and that Paul is engaged in the ancient art of rhetorical persuasion. Former historical-critical interpretations of Paul’s arguments in 1 Corinthians have relied upon reconstructive socio-historical approaches that ultimately shield “Paul’s rhetorical strategy by resisting the ‘decoding’ of terms, concepts, and strategic modes of argumentation he uses” (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 217) .<sup>30</sup> In these types of approaches the emphasis is upon understanding “Paul’s arguments from a decidedly historical perspective” (Vander Stichele and Penner 2005a, 288).

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<sup>29</sup>Also see Økland (2004) and Conway (2008). Økland (2004, 31–35) makes use of what she terms a “ritual approach” to investigating 1 Corinthians 11-14 which she argues allows her to focus more clearly upon the ancient discourse of gender and ritual and how ritual constructs gendered spaces. The “ritual approach” as posited by Økland (2004, 35) allows her to glean gendered nuances from the contemporaneous Corinthian texts, and in particular, archaeological texts. This in turn allows for a comparison of “utterances concerning women in the texts of Corinthian cults, rituals and sanctuaries including the *ekklesia*, and thus finding traces of a discourse on ‘women’ and ritual space where cultic models of the female are related to the space the ritual takes place within”.

<sup>30</sup>See for example Wire (1990b); Martin (1995b) and Winter (2003).



The shift in approach to a gender-critical approach has also resulted in a shift of focus from the historical issues at stake in the analysis of texts to the enquiry of more important issues of gender construction(s) and identity(ies) that are central to “ancient rhetorical theories of proper comportment and oratorical display” (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 219).<sup>31</sup> Økland (2004, 1) in her analysis of 1 Corinthians 11-14 demonstrates that Paul’s exhortations regarding women’s ritual roles and ritual clothing in 1 Corinthians 11–14 structure and gender the Christian gathering as a specific type of space, a “sanctuary space”, constructed through ritual. The central point of Paul’s rhetoric in 1 Corinthians 11-14, therefore, is not women’s veiling or covering, but rather the production and maintenance of a gendered order of the ritual space in the community (Økland 2004, 1).<sup>32</sup> Such a gender-critical engagement of the text allows for a far more comprehensive forum for dialogue by concentrating on the “interrelationship of the discursive identities of male and female ‘players’ created in and through Pauline argumentation” (Vander Stichele and Penner 2005, 291). Shapiro (2003, 517), who also implements a gender sensitive approach, or what she terms “reading for gender”, in her investigation of Jewish philosophical texts notes that “reading for gender does not mean either reading for women or as a woman”. She states,

To read for metaphors of ‘woman,’ ‘body,’ ‘gender relations,’ or ‘sexuality’ is not to read for some actual woman or women that the text, somehow, represents. Nor does reading for gender mean reading as an ‘essentialized’ woman reader who, as a woman, can (supposedly)

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<sup>31</sup>I am aware of the caution of this distinction because many of the gender-critical approaches that are used in the analysis of biblical material depart from a historical critical perspective. The difference, however, is that the type of historiography is different – it no longer simply and only enquires as to “what” or “whether something” has happened, but investigates the socio-historical relations of power, specifically as they pertain to gender, that underlie the text.

<sup>32</sup>Her understanding of 1 Corinthians 11–14 is based upon an investigation of an assortment of material texts, while the discourse of sanctuary space is grounded upon notions of ancient Mediterranean gender discourse. This highlights how space in antiquity is gendered, primarily as it is related to formulations of the order of the cosmos (Økland 2004, 2). Although Økland (2004, 1) mentions that she is cautious not to reproduce the misleading notion “that only women are gender”, she still, however, focuses most of her attention in her analysis primarily upon women in particular. See for example Økland (2004, 69) where she comments on how gender in the ancient Mediterranean world is constructed through ritual space, but her analysis focuses solely upon female gender construction instead. Because she does not focus on men and women in the text, it seems that she primarily produces work on women and not gender in 1 Corinthians.

locate the ‘feminine’ stratum of the text. Rather, it is to read for constructions and performances of gender in these texts with an interest in the intellectual and cultural labor these tropes enact (Shapiro 2003, 518).

Similarly, my interest will be upon an examination of how gender is constructed and represented through the argumentative discourse of the text (chapters four and five), and also how Paul constructs his gendered identity in the text (chapter six). Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 219) too, have displayed the value in moving beyond “mirror readings” of Pauline literature to examining the text as argument by focusing upon the argumentative strategies employed by Paul to persuade his audience.<sup>33</sup> Contemporary biblical scholars have also demonstrated the fact that the ancient Mediterranean civilization was constructed and orchestrated on a cosmic gender structure that was viewed as natural and was integrated into all areas of life so that gender strictly demarcated all aspects of life in ancient Mediterranean society (Stegemann and Stegemann 1999, 361; Økland 2004, 1). Dube (2003, 60) observes,

It is a feminist tradition in biblical studies to focus on passages that feature women, as attested by our current women/feminist commentaries. No doubt the method has furthered the feminist struggle by highlighting women as both victims and agents of liberation in the text, but the approach seems to imply that passages that do not feature women characters are less important to the feminist search for justice. The approach seems to neglect the fact that gender constructions pervade all social spheres of life.

Because Paul is structured by and functions within the larger discourses of the ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s), one cannot comprehend the gendered rhetoric of 1

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<sup>33</sup>Lyons (1985) coined this term and it has also been used by Vorster (1994, 127–145) in the context of the letter to the Romans, more specifically in the deployment of the category “rhetorical situation”. According to Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 217, n. 13) “mirror readings” should be understood as “the technique of reading from what is explicitly argued to that which is allegedly being responded to in the text, attempting to draw out the unknown by reversing the logic of the stated argument”. Cf. Wire (1990b, 12–38); Penner and Lopez (2012, 33–50).

Corinthians without recourse to its interconnections with ancient gender discourse in general. Furthermore, when Paul is engaged in persuasion through the discourse of 1 Corinthians, gender construction(s) and representation(s), because of the nature of gender in the ancient world, is precisely what is at stake. One cannot, therefore, comprehend the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians without understanding the gendered nature of the discourse.<sup>34</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter my aim has been to provide a literature review of gender studies on 1 Corinthians which is aimed primarily at surveying previous research on the subject and secondly, to briefly articulate my own entry into the discussion of gender in 1 Corinthians. Before examining how gender is constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians, it is necessary to first place this text within a broader ancient Mediterranean discourse regarding gender that will form the basis upon which 1 Corinthians will be investigated. In the following chapter, therefore, I move the discussion to an investigation of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the ancient Mediterranean from the period around the first century of the Common Era.

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 217, 236–237).

## Chapter 3:

### Gender Construction(s) and Representation(s) in the Ancient Mediterranean from the First and Second Century

#### Introduction

The discussion of contemporary identity and gender theory in chapter one will now serve as a key theoretical catalyst and will be a useful analytical tool (or thinking technology) to understand ancient construction(s) and representation(s) of gendered identities.<sup>1</sup> The discussion below will demonstrate the legitimising normative constraints of ancient Mediterranean culture to script gendered bodies to perform in certain ways.<sup>2</sup> The construction(s) and representation(s) of gender along the dominant gendered trajectory of the “one-sex model”, as discussed below, seems to have clear parallels to constructivism as articulated in chapter one of this thesis.

Ancient gender construction(s) and representation(s) was an interactive procedure involving both a performance of gender and an evaluation of that performance. The *habitus* of the hegemonic ancient gender system(s) generated and navigated the bodiliness of people which in turn enabled replicated structurings of gender that came into being as the product of reiteration.<sup>3</sup> Gender, as constructed and represented in this ancient context, was founded upon an asymmetrical hierarchical separation between women and men rooted in both social institutions and social practices. The notion of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity, introduced in chapter one, will also become an important analytical category that highlights the plurality of constructions of masculinity(ies) and femininities in the ancient Mediterranean and will stress the existence of culturally dominant forms of gender constructions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See pages 14-25 of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup>See page 17 for a discussion of “legitimizing identity” as discussed by Castells (2010, 8).

<sup>3</sup>See page 27 of this thesis for a discussion of *habitus*.

<sup>4</sup>See page 28 of this thesis.

Before examining the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the discourse of 1 Corinthians, it is necessary first to locate this text within a broader ancient Mediterranean gender discourse that will form the basic contextual framework upon which 1 Corinthians will be investigated in the chapters to follow. As biblical scholars interested in gender-critical analyses have recently argued any notion of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in the New Testament have to be analysed alongside the dominant gender ideology(ies) of that epoch (Conway 2008, 16; Vander Stichele and Penner 2009, 4). This chapter, therefore, has as its main aim to give a brief overview of how gender was constructed and represented in the ancient Mediterranean during the period around the first century of the Common Era.<sup>5</sup> In order to accomplish this objective I will first provide a synoptic account of the hegemonic gender models that informed the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in this ancient world. Second, I will then embark upon a conversation that seeks to delineate the dominant gender ideologies paying particular attention to some of the normative

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<sup>5</sup>Recent research in the field of classical studies and particularly Graeco-Roman constructions of ancient gender systems has demonstrated the efficacy of distinguishing between Greek, Roman and Jewish notions of gender as found in the context of the ancient Mediterranean (Hallet and Skinner 1997; Skinner 1997b, 3). In this regard, however, I follow scholars who object to the notion of cultural particularism (Baker 2009, 79–95) and rather prefer the theory of intersectionality (Schüssler Fiorenza 2009, 17) and cultural hybridity (Burrus 2005, 51) that they suggest [Contra Foucault (1985; 1986)]. These scholars tend to subsume Roman eroticism of the classical era under the rubric of a homogenous Graeco-Roman sexuality. Richlin (1998, 138–170), has launched a feminist reaction to Foucault, with many scholars following in her wake. She critiques Foucault's approach noting that he systematically avoids pertinent questions regarding women's subjectivities in respect of sex and gender identity in the ancient world. Cf. Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 83, n.7). It should be clarified, however, that I am not, by my articulation as represented in this chapter, suggesting a homogenous and neatly packaged Ancient Mediterranean gendered system and one that is devoid of any cultural idiosyncracies. Neither am I denying the ostensible differences within the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) evident in Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures in that epoch. I do, however, given the purpose of this thesis, deem it to be sufficient to simply provide a hybrid type overview of the broader ancient Mediterranean gendered context paying particular attention to the hegemonic construction(s) and representation(s) of ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in this epoch. This I maintain is sufficient to provide me with the analytical framework by which to investigate the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians which is the main purpose of this thesis.

construction(s) and representation(s) of ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies), as performed and mapped out onto the ancient bodies in these cultures.<sup>6</sup>

In the sub-section that follows I will provide a synoptic account of the hegemonic gender models of the ancient Mediterranean. In my formulation of this sub-section I have quoted and referred to a wide variety of sources, ranging from secondary to primary, from Greek to Roman, from before the advent of the Common Era to examples from within the Common Era. My intention is not to specify a particular moment in history, a particular place in history, but my intention is to provide a wide variety of discursive practices, reiterated over a very long period of time (from fourth century BCE to well into the Common Era), thereby accumulating in power (Butler 1993) to be taken as realities, as factualities, that is, as the *habitus* of the ancient Mediterranean world.

Vorster (2005, 39) cautions the academy of religious studies to be critically aware not to develop any “totalising terminologies” and “that a sensitivity should be cultivated which could move away from a *sui generis* attitude”. This articulation by Vorster is very relevant to my thesis, particularly in my discussion of a synoptic ancient Mediterranean gender overview which follows. In my discussion I am in no way suggesting a solitary and univocal articulation of gender that is devoid of particularities, rhetoricity, nuance, ambivalence and resistance. I structure my argument in this broad stroked, synoptic manner so as to exemplify the dominant gendered construction(s) and representation(s) that over time developed the appearance of normativity.

Vorster (2005, 248) mentions that “the rhetoricity of religious discourses” are multiple and give rise to manifold structurings of meanings and meaning effects. “Instead of finding in religious discourses a search for an ever-evading truth, rhetoric refers us to the question why these discourses have been constructed in a particular mode” (Vorster 2005, 248).

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<sup>6</sup>In this regard I follow Conway (2008, 15–16) and her articulation that “[w]hile places of difference and resistance to this [gendered] ideology exist, as well as certain internal contradictions”, it is more important to detail “the consistent and pervasive nature of the [gendered] ideology that any such deviations were up against”. These gendered normativities articulated the ideal images of gender construction(s) and representation(s) and the investigation which follows is modelled after this dominant gendered ideology. Cf. Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 49).

“Owing to the power of religious discursive practices”, the gendered normativities that are mentioned in this chapter, and also in many other places in this thesis, are indicative of how “these values have acquired the status of objectivity” (Vorster 2005, 252) and naturalness over many years of reiteration constituted by the *habitus* of the hegemonic ancient gender system(s).

Butler argues for a notion of “sedimented effects” in relation to the “constructedness” of sex and gender, the implications of which are relevant here too. She maintains,

Construction not only takes place *in* time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms; sex (gender) is both produced and destabilized in the course of this reiteration. As a sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice, sex (gender) acquires its naturalized effect, and, yet, it is also by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. This instability is the *deconstituting* possibility in the very process of repetition (Butler 1993, xix).

It would ostensibly be possible to refer to instances where engendered hierarchies did not apply and were more flexible. “However, centuries of using several mechanisms propagating and enforcing these views in the ancient Mediterranean world must have created a social script or index rendering certain ways of putting bodies into discourse as ‘natural’” (Vorster 2003, 95, n.4).

## 1. A Synoptic Account of the Hegemonic Gender Models of the Ancient Mediterranean

Recent scholarship has demonstrated that the term gender, once appropriated to ancient sources, refers to a heuristic, etic description and not to an emic description (Parker 1997, 47; Walters 1997, 35; Moore 2001, 166).<sup>7</sup> As Økland (2004, 40) mentions, “The concept [gender] helps us to gather under one umbrella a variety of ancient assumptions and views of the origins of the world, cosmos, women, men and to analyze their relation to each other and to the divine”.<sup>8</sup>

### 1.1. One-Sex/One Flesh Model

Martin (1995b, 15) maintains that the ancient Mediterranean world, including Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures did not base their gender system(s) upon “an ontological dualism in the Cartesian sense”.<sup>9</sup> Instead, this ancient context, based its gender system(s) upon social criteria (Parker 1997, 47; Martin 2006, 83). Laqueur (1990, 6) points out that by the late eighteenth century “[a]n anatomy and physiology of incommensurability”, based upon anatomical difference and sexual dimorphism,<sup>10</sup> “replaced a metaphysics of hierarchy in the

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<sup>7</sup>Parker (1997, 63, n. 1) states that “[e]mic (also called experience-near) categories in a culture correspond to the *phon-emic* level of analysis, while etic categories (experience-far), correspond to the *phon-etic* level. Emic categories, like phonemes, are those which are of significance (literally make a difference) within the culture itself, specifically those systems of classification which are used to divide the universe of discourse”. Etic categories are those which are of significance to the analyst or interpreter (Parker 1997, 63–64). Accordingly this suggests that contemporary notions of heterosexuality, homosexuality, transexuality, bisexuality, intersexuality and transgender cannot be appropriated to ancient notions of sex and gender (Foucault 1985, 188; Satlow 1994, 24; Broton 2003, 184) [Contra Richlin (1993, 523–573) and Farley (2008, 29–30), who maintain that there was homosexuality and even lesbianism in antiquity.] While the existence of same-sex desire cannot be denied for antiquity as represented by several media, such as sculptures and images, and especially textual material, and while an ambiguous attitude toward same-sex desire and morality can be discerned during the Roman Imperial period, the naming or entitlement of homosexuality, lesbianism, heterosexuality, transexuality, bisexuality, intersexuality and transgender as fields of knowledge, gradually producing fixed identities occurred only during the beginning of the nineteenth century. It would, therefore, be anachronistic to impose nineteenth century categories, infused and politicised by a completely different value system, to an extent pathologising and universalising human sexual behaviour, on to engendered interaction during the Roman Imperial period. Cf. Parker (1997, 47) and Skinner (2005, 7–10).

<sup>8</sup>My emphasis.

<sup>9</sup>Martin (1995b, 25) mentions that a few philosophers, most likely Platonists, may have highlighted a gender notion that supported a dualism between the body and the soul. Such theorists, however, he mentions comprised only a small minority in comparison to the broader Mediterranean society.

<sup>10</sup>See Gleason (1990, 389–416) for further discussion.



representation of woman in relation to man”, a metaphysics that had existed from antiquity and was based upon sociological criteria. A “one-sex/one-flesh model” as described by Laqueur (1990, 25), is much closer, then, to understanding the hegemonic ancient conception(s) of gender.<sup>11</sup> Instead of an ontological binary, scholars maintain that the ancient Mediterranean gender context, should be thought of along the lines of “a hierarchical spectrum or continuum” (Martin 2006, 84).<sup>12</sup> In this regard masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) are understood as being located on alternate sides of a hierarchical gendered spectrum upon which many subject formations were located regardless of anatomical sex (Gleason 1990, 390; Laqueur 1990, 4–8, 19–23; Martin 1995b, 15). According to this gendered world the four primary principles of “warm, cold, dry and moist”, which constituted all animals including humans and the interplay of these basic principles and their action upon each other, formed the basic premise upon which everything in nature was constructed, including gender, sex and sexuality (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.9.126; 3.7.168; Plutarch, *Placita philosophorum*. 5.19).<sup>13</sup> Galen, writing in the second century CE, mentions,

There are, however, a considerable number of not undistinguished men—philosophers and physicians—who refer action to the Warm and the Cold, and who subordinate to these, as passive, the Dry and the Moist; Aristotle, in fact, was the first who attempted to bring back the causes of the various special activities to these principles, and he was followed later by the Stoic school. These latter, of course, could logically make active principles of the Warm and Cold, since they refer the change of the elements themselves into one another to certain diffusions and condensations. This does not hold of Aristotle, however; seeing that he employed the four qualities to explain the genesis of the elements, he ought properly also to have referred the causes of all the special activities to these. . . . Of course, if anyone were to maintain that in the case of animals and plants the Warm and Cold are more active, the Dry

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<sup>11</sup>Also see Økland (2004, 46–49) for a brief overview and discussion of the “one-sex” model.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Martin (1995b, 15, 32–33) and Skinner (2005, 152).

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Galen (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 1.1.19).

and Moist less so, he might perhaps have even Hippocrates on his side; but if he were to say that this happens in all cases, he would, I imagine, lack support (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 1.3.8-9).

Galen asserts further, “As for the scientific proofs of all this, they are to be drawn from these principles of which I have already spoken—namely, that bodies act upon and are acted upon by each other in virtue of the Warm, Cold, Moist and Dry” (*On The Natural Faculties*. 2.9.126).<sup>14</sup> In this regard then bodies, had both male and female constituents to them,<sup>15</sup> and could move along the hierarchical gendered continuum in different positionalities depending on how much masculinity (strength, warmth and dryness) or femininity (weakness, cold, moisture), their bodies or “bodiliness” constituted at any particular time.<sup>16</sup> According to this gendered schema, the warm (masculine) principle was regarded as the superior and most active principle and the cold (feminine) principle was seen as inferior and passive (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.9.89; 2.8.111).<sup>17</sup> Galen asks, “And what is semen? Clearly the active principal of the animal, the material principle being the menstrual blood” (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.3.86).

Laqueur (1990, 25) mentions that according to this hierarchical gendered schema a minimum of two genders cohered with only “one sex”, and the parameters between what constituted ideal masculinity and femininity where “of degree and not of kind”. The degree in question here was the degree of heat within a person’s body. Females from this vantage point were regarded as defective or less perfect males, a view supported by distinguished natural philosophers such as, Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.296).<sup>18</sup> Galen makes this perfectly clear with two extant texts when he

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<sup>14</sup>Cf. Galen (*On The Natural Faculties*. 1.6.12-13; 2.3.86; 2.4.89; 2.8.11; 2.8.116-117; 2.8.117-118; 2.9.126; 2.9.129-130).

<sup>15</sup>This notion that bodies are “constituted” is gleaned from Butler (1993, ix, x). Vorster (2003, 69–78) implements the work of Butler (1993, 1) and her notion of the “regulatory body” and demonstrates the efficacy of this gendered thinking technology to understand gender in antiquity and early Christianity.

<sup>16</sup>See n. 53 of chapter one.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Galen (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.296).

<sup>18</sup>For further discussion of the premodern “one-sex” model according to which women were viewed as underdeveloped males, see Laqueur (1990, 1–62) and Martin (1995b, 29–37, 198–249).

asserts, first, “The female is less perfect than the male for one, principal reason—because she is colder, for if among animals the warm one is the more active, a colder animal would be less perfect than a warmer” (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.296). And second, and perhaps more eloquently this time, Galen notes,

Now just as mankind is the most perfect of all animals, so within mankind the man is more perfect than the woman, and the reason for his perfection is his excess of heat, for heat is Nature’s primary instrument. Hence in those animals that have less of it, her workmanship is necessarily more imperfect, and so it is no wonder that the female is less perfect than the male by as much as she is colder than he. In fact, just as the mole has imperfect eyes, though certainly not so imperfect as they are in those animals that do not have any trace of them at all, so to the woman is less perfect than the man in respect to the generative parts. For the parts were formed within her when she was still a fetus, but could not because of the defect in the heat emerge and project on the outside, and this though making the animal itself that was being formed less perfect than the one that is complete in all respects, provided no small advantage for the race; for there needs must be a female. Indeed, you ought not to think that our Creator would purposely make half the whole race imperfect and, as it were, mutilated, unless there was to be some great advantage in such a mutilation (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.299).<sup>19</sup>

Recent research in classical studies has demonstrated that for centuries, possibly even as early as the third and fourth centuries BCE and surviving up until the late eighteenth

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<sup>19</sup>The “advantage” to this “mutilation”, to use Galen’s terminology, is women’s chief function as baby makers (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.300-305; 317-321; 325-326). It was also believed that female semen as well as female testes, not unlike the females themselves, was regarded as less perfect in comparison to that of their more perfect male counterparts who had perfect semen and testes. The semen and testes of women, therefore, were incapable of active reproduction (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.301; Plutarch, *Placita philosophorum*. 5.3.5-5.5.6). In this regard, the notion of women as fertile soil and baby making machines, was clearly validated by physiognomy and the science of anatomy. Foucault (1986, 112) mentions that within the ancient sex/gender system male sperm is what gives the male his superiority. He declares, “The male is preeminent because he is the spermatoc animal par excellence” (Foucault 1986, 112). Laqueur (1990, 55) furthermore mentions that sperm “is like the essence of citizen” in ancient Graeco-Roman culture.

century, Greek and Roman natural philosophers, medical doctors and medical writers held a view that men and women were exactly the same from an anatomic view point. Their only difference was in the location of their sexual organs. As gleaned from philosophical, anatomical and physiognomic treatises it was believed that women were, anatomically speaking, inverted males (Laqueur 1990, 4; Conway 2008, 16).<sup>20</sup>

Galen elaborated on the subject of an inverted topology of physiology in his complex hierarchical gender-typing system, and in a series of writings he developed an extensive discourse on the subject of the body.<sup>21</sup> Galen asserts,

All the parts, then, that men have, women have too, the difference between them lying in only one thing, which must be kept in mind throughout the discussion, namely, that in women the parts are within [the body], whereas in men they are outside, in the region called the perineum. Consider first whichever ones you please, turn outward the woman's turn inward, so to speak, and fold double the man's and you will find the same in both in every respect. Then think first, please, of the man's turned in and extending inward between the rectum and the bladder. If this should happen, the scrotum would necessarily take the place of the uteri, with the testes lying outside, next to it on either side; the penis of the male would become the neck of the cavity that had been formed; and the skin at the end of the penis, now called the prepuce, would become the female pudendum [the vagina] itself (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.297-298).

This inverted anatomical topology was structured upon the belief that female genitals were identical to male genitals, the only distinction being the location of the reproductive organs. In females the reproductive organs were situated within the body and not outside the body

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<sup>20</sup>Like Conway (2008, 7) I maintain that literary texts do not simply portray historical reality, they take part in the construction of reality.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Halperin (1990, 283) and also Martin (1995b, 32).

like male reproductive organs.<sup>22</sup> Natural philosophers, medical writers and theorists of the ancient Mediterranean, therefore, pictured a hybrid of male and female seed, in which a variety of proportions were achievable. In this regard the differences in males and females were in respect of slight degrees of vital heat and perfection, or coldness and imperfection (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.336). The seed produced in men was regarded as thicker and warmer than that produced in women which was scantier and cooler and produced imperfect sperm due to smaller testes in women and because the testes in women were underdeveloped (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.317).

This view was held by many leading intellectuals as the following extant text by Pseudo-Plutarch reveals:

Pythagoras, Epicurus, and Democritus say that women have a seminal projection, but their spermatic vessels are inverted; and it is this that makes them have a venereal appetite. Aristotle and Plato, that they emit a material moisture, as sweat we see produced by exercise and labor; but that moisture has no spermatic power. Hippo, that women have a seminal emission, but not after the mode of men; it contributes nothing to generation, for it falls without the matrix; and therefore some women without coition, especially widows, give the seed. The same also asserts that from men the bones, from women the flesh proceeds (*Placita philosophorum*. 5.5).

Physiognomists maintained humans to be the most perfect of all the animals, and man was regarded as more perfect than woman because of an abundance of heat (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.299).<sup>23</sup> The topographical interactions Galen mentions were not themselves to be regarded as the foundation of sexual hierarchy; instead it is to be viewed as a way of visualizing it (Laqueur 1990, 26).<sup>24</sup> Biology was in this sense regarded as employed in the

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<sup>22</sup>For further discussion regarding Galen's topology of the body see among many others Gleason (1990, 390–391) and Katz (1995, 36).

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Laqueur (1990, 40).

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Gleason (1990, 391).

service of a much more profound and superior extra-corporeal reality. The leading intellectuals of the time viewed gender identity along a continuum of conformity and nonconformity which existed in variegating degrees. They held a view of gender construction that was founded upon polarised differences that seemingly signified the vast differences between men and women, but this gender system in fact merely distinguished masculine gender construction in terms of authentic and counterfeit performances (Gleason 1990, 412; Winkler 1990b, 50).<sup>25</sup>

Women who portray the marks of the male type and men who portray the characteristics of the female type were regarded as ambivalent impostors because their bodies were seen to be incongruent with the construction of ideal gender. As Gleason (1990, 391) observes, “Hence masculine and feminine functioned as physiognomical categories for both male and female subjects”. Bodies that favoured the right side were regarded as more masculine and bodies that favoured the left side were seen as more feminine. Pseudo-Plutarch recounts,

Empedocles affirms, that heat and cold give the difference in the generation of males and females. Hence is it, as histories acquaint us, that the first men had their original from the earth in the eastern and southern parts, and the first females in the northern parts thereof. Parmenides is of opinion perfectly contrariant. He affirms that men first sprouted out of the northern earth, for their bodies are more dense; women out of the southern, for theirs are more rare and fine. Hippo, that the more compacted and strong sperm, and the more fluid and weak, discriminate the sexes. Anaxagoras and Parmenides, that the seed of the man is naturally cast from his right side into the right side of the womb, or from the left side of the man into the left side of the womb; when there is an alteration in this course of nature,

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<sup>25</sup>The notion of gender performance is gleaned from Butler (1993, ix, xi, xxi). She mentions that gender as a performative construction, or better yet a series of performative constructions, does not imply a “wilful and instrumental subject” or that gender is something one puts on like an item of clothing and is, therefore, not something we choose, but rather, suggests that the subject is “constituted” and “(re)constituted” and that we construct and (re)construct our identities in the very memory of that construction.

females are generated. Cleophanes, whom Aristotle makes mention of, assigns the generation of men to the right testicle, of women to the left. Leucippus attributes the reason for it to the alteration or diversity of parts, according to which the man hath a yard, the female the matrix; as to any other reason he is silent. Democritus, that the parts which are common to both sexes are engendered indifferently by one or the other; but the peculiar parts by the one that is more prevalent. Hippo, that if the spermatic faculty be more effectual, the male, if the nutritive aliment, the female is generated (*Placita philosophorum*. 5.7).<sup>26</sup>

Similarly also Galen mentions,

Hence, since there are two principles for the generation of males, the right uterus in the female and the right testis in the male, and since generally the uterus is the better able of the two to make the fetus like itself because it is associated with it for a long time, there is good reason for the fact that for the most part male embryos are found there and females in the left uterus; for in most cases this [left uterus] makes the semen resemble itself. But sometimes, if it is overcome by the power of the heat in the semen, it could allow the fetus to become male rather than female. These cases are rare, however; for they require a great excess [of heat]. Most frequently the male fetus is found in the right uterus and the female in the left, the cause of this being the origin of the veins that nourish the uteri (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.310).

According to the “one-sex” gender model the body functions to demonstrate a point, rather than to validate its truth, and as Laqueur (1990, 62) asserts, it should be construed as “illustrative rather than determinant”, and it “could therefore, register and absorb any number of shifts along the axis and valuations of difference”. As Martin (1995b, 25) succinctly points out,

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<sup>26</sup>Cf. Aristotle (CA. 4.1.765b2); Galen (*On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.293, 306-307, 309); Hippocrates (Aphorism. 5.48; *Littr.* 6.550, 551).

[A] human being was a confused commingling of substances. . . . for most people of Greco-Roman culture the human body was of a piece with its environment. The self was a precarious, temporary state of affairs, constituted by forces surrounding and pervading the body, like the radio waves that bounce around and through the bodies of modern urbanites. In such a maelstrom of cosmological forces, the individualism of modern conceptions disappears, and the body is perceived as a location in a continuum of cosmic movement. The body—or the “self”—is an unstable point of transition, not a discrete, permanent, solid entity.

In this mono-sexual continuum a gendered hierarchy imprinted itself onto the bodies of ancient subjects as suggested by Martin (1995b, 32). The notion of *habitus* applies here too, as this gendered hierarchy formed a system of “structured, structuring dispositions” that were mapped onto ancient bodiliness (Bourdieu 1990, 52).<sup>27</sup>

Laqueur (1990, 35) mentions further that “[a]natomy in the context of sexual difference was a representational strategy that illuminated a more stable extracorporeal reality. There existed many genders, but only one adaptable sex”. In this hierarchical gendered framework, sexual anatomy, was regarded as merely one marker amid several of the body’s position upon a hierarchical gendered continuum (Laqueur 1990, 25). Gender, as perceived according to this “one-sex” topology, was, therefore, based upon a completely different axis to that of our modern notions of gender construction(s) and representation(s).<sup>28</sup> As Laqueur (1990, 62) summarises,

In a public world that was overwhelmingly male, the one-sex model displayed what was already massively evident in culture more generally: *man* is the measure of all things, and

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<sup>27</sup>Cf. Butler (1993, ix) and her ideas on “normative constraints”. For a discussion of how ancient Graeco-Roman society inscribed gender hierarchies upon and within their bodies see Vorster (2003, 70–71). Also see Stewart (1997, 8); Foxhall (1988, 5).

<sup>28</sup>For a discussion of modern notions of gender see, among others, Butler (2002); Jackson and Scott (2002a); Stanley, Jackson and Scott (2002); and West and Zimmerman (2002).



woman does not exist as an ontologically distinct category. Not all males are masculine, potent, honorable, or hold power, and some women exceed some men in each of these categories. But the standard of the human body and its representations is the male body.<sup>29</sup>

## 1.2. The Active-Passive Gender Model

The basic assumption supporting the active-passive gender model was that there were only two kinds of bodies that interacted with each other and could be identified by their positionality on a gender spectrum that was regulated by innate “principles” governed by “nature” and made normative by the social and ideological constructions that legitimised the “principles” of activity and passivity (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.4.89; 3.7.167). Galen maintains that “the bodily parts of animals are governed by the Warm, the Cold, the Dry and the Moist, the one pair being active and the other passive, and that among these the Warm has most power in connection with all functions, but especially with the genesis of the humours” (*On The Natural Faculties*. 2.8.111, 116-117, 2.9.126).<sup>30</sup> This system, not unlike the “one-sex” model that was articulated above, was also hierarchical and positioned the active (male) subject higher up the vertical gendered ranking with the passive (female) subject taking the spot lower down the scale. Accordingly this gender system created an isomorphic interaction between sexual encounters and social relationships, where sexual acts according to this agonistic structure was viewed as an act of phallic penetration by which the active partner penetrates the body of the subordinate and passive partner (Foucault 1985, 215; Halperin 1990, 266). This interaction was considered to be identical to the relationship involving a social superior and a social subordinate and commensurately was synonymous to the gendered roles of masculinity and femininity (Foucault 1985, 215).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>His emphasis.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. Galen (*On The Natural Faculties*. 2.8.116-117; 2.9.126).

<sup>31</sup>The active-passive sex/gender model as articulated by Foucault (1985), has recently received further attention and explication in the work of classicists Parker (1997:47–65) and Walters (1997:29–46) and their articulation of the teratogenic grid model. This gender model considers gender performance to be a crucial element of ancient construction(s) and representation(s) of the ancient bodily *habitus*.

Penetration, which was ideologically connected to social position and political status, was deemed to be the realm of the adult free male.<sup>32</sup> The person penetrated, ideally, was someone of inferior political and social status, whether a woman, a slave (male or female), a foreigner (male or female), or a boy (Foucault 1985, 47; Halperin 1990, 267). Real masculinity, the sexual position of the dominant agent or penetrator, was achieved only at adulthood, after a pubescent had navigated through the cultural constraints of passivity (femininity) and subordination. A priority in the construction of this dominant notion of masculinity was the notion of self-control and autonomy. Any loss of self-control and power through any action whether through sickness, overindulgence in carnal pleasure, any slip of moral resolution, or any deviation from what was regarded to be ideal performances of masculinity could lead to decline into a passive feminine state.<sup>33</sup>

This active masculine principle may be seen in the articulation by Philo regarding the Genesis creation account:

Why while they are hiding themselves from the face of God, the woman is not mentioned first, since she was the first to eat of the forbidden fruit: but why the man is spoken of in the first place; for the sacred historian's words are, "And Adam and his wife hid themselves?" (Genesis 3:9). The woman, being imperfect and depraved by nature, made the beginning of sinning and prevaricating; but the man, as being the more excellent and perfect creature, was the first to set the example of blushing and of being ashamed, and indeed, of every good feeling and action (*Questions on Genesis*, 1.43).

Aristotle maintained, "the female, as female, is passive, and the male, as male, is active" (*Generation of Animals*. 1.21.729b). Also Philo states, "For progress [toward virtue] is indeed nothing else than the giving up of the female gender by changing into the male, since the

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<sup>32</sup>Notions of penetrator and penetrated differed somewhat in all three major cultures of the ancient Mediterranean, Greek, Roman and Jewish alike, and my articulation here in no way should be taken to imply that their somehow existed a homogenous understanding regarding this phenomenon. For further discussion see Skinner (1997a, 129–150); Walters (1997, 29–46).

<sup>33</sup>On the relationship in antiquity between manliness, power, and freedom, see Foucault (1985, 78–86).

female gender is material, passive, corporeal, and sense-perceptible, while the male is active, rational, incorporeal and more akin to mind and thought” (*Questions on Exodus*, 1.8). Accordingly, this bi-polar system polarised the categories and behaviours of the penetrator, who was active, superordinate, and masculine with the penetrated, who was passive, subordinate, and feminine, “ideally replicating and even confirming social superiority or inferiority” (Foucault 1985, 215; Foucault 1986, 4–36). Penetration, which was conceptually linked to status and political power, was the domain of the adult free male. The partner penetrated, ideally, was a person of lesser political status, whether a woman, a slave (male or female), a foreigner (male or female), or a boy (Foucault 1985, 47; Halperin 1990, 267).<sup>34</sup>

In accordance to this sex/gender system or as Halperin (1990, 266) calls it, the “socio-sexual system”, all ideal sexual relations were of necessity hierarchical. The passive role was considered shameful, and for an adult free male to be submissive erotically was regarded as a mark of moral weakness and, therefore, femininity. Men were admonished to practice self-control in sexual relations while women, on the other hand, and in line with male chauvinism, were denigrated as sexually promiscuous and insatiable, adulterous and talkative which was symptomatic of how femininity was constructed and represented by elite men through prescriptive texts (Juvenal, *Satire*. 6. 28-54).<sup>35</sup> The ideology behind this represented andronormativity and male hegemony.

An essential characteristic of the teratogenic and the active/passive gender system, not unlike the “one-sex” model, was that social patterns of domination and submission produced “power differentials” between men and women in assimilating gender roles and transferring them by standards not constantly synonymous with anatomical sex. Sexual relations defined primarily “as bodily penetration of an inferior”, a situation that immediately displaced the passive subject (woman, boy, foreigner, or even adult male) to an effeminate condition. Active (penetrative), and passive (receptive) types of sexual gratification were, therefore, “polarized”, with the active status seen as “naturally” the right of men (Skinner 1997b, 3).

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. Philo (*Contemplative Life*. 69–70); Plato (*Symposium*. 183b-184b).

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Plutarch (*Moralia* 6. *Concerning Talkativeness*. 507.11).

Scholars have noted the insufficiency of the active-passive sex/gender system as argued by Foucault (1985) and others, and have called instead for the expansion of the gendered ideology of the ancient Mediterranean world “to include a more complex view of the hierarchies that existed in the imperial contexts of antiquity” as articulated by Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 55). Similarly Conway (2008:21) argues that the active-passive gendered ideology reflected in the teratogenic grid as outlined by Parker (1997:47–65) and Walters (1997:29–46) is an oversimplification of the complex gendered system depicted in the ancient Mediterranean.<sup>36</sup> Despite these criticisms, however, Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 64) mention that the usefulness of these gendered schemas is that they sketch “the sociocultural assumptions and values of that epoch” and help “construct a framework from/in which to work from”. The gender models as derived from the ancient prescriptive texts, however, map out a sex/gender system that is embodied in the larger sociocultural assumptions of the ancient world. And in this manner these gender models prove helpful as they conceptualise the ancient Mediterranean gender system(s) and provide an analytical lens for investigation. The picture that starts to develop is one of a broad and complex gendered system or gendered matrix, one that intersected with other cultural markers such as race, sex, religion,<sup>37</sup> and class, and one in which the normative conceptions of gender as represented by prescriptive texts remains open for acts of gender subversion, reification and abjection.<sup>38</sup>

### **1.3. Four Model Ancient Gender Schema**

Økland (2004, 40–49) suggests that a further three emic gender models, in addition to the “one-sex” model, shaped ancient Mediterranean society. According to her thesis these

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<sup>36</sup>Cf. The articulation by Conway (2008:28–29) in which she notes the ambivalence of the dominant ideology of Graeco-Roman masculinity in relation to anger and also see Penner and Vander Stichele (2009, 61–62) and their criticism of this model. Similarly also see Satlow (1994, 1–2) for a discussion which highlights persons within Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures who traversed the sexual binaries of active and passive gender roles and in the process created gender ambivalence and deviance to the ideal norms as constructed in this context.

<sup>37</sup>For a study that traces the construction of gender, race, and sexuality at the intersection of race and class see Stoler (2002). Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza (2009, 1–23).

<sup>38</sup>For further articulation of this notion and its impact upon the discussion of the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in 1 Corinthians, see chapter four and five of this thesis.

three emic gender models are expressed in myths and stories of rituals, whereas, the etic “one sex” model is contrived mainly from philosophical and medical texts. She describes these three extra aetiological gender models as the: “adam and eve”,<sup>39</sup> “women as fertile soil”, and “pandora” models (Økland 2004, 40).<sup>40</sup> Økland (2004, 40) and others suggest that the “one-sex” model as delineated by Laqueur (1990) over-simplifies the gender context of the ancient Mediterranean in its assertion that the “one-sex” model be seen as *the* gender ideology of antiquity. Contemporary scholars have asserted, rather, that ancient gender discourses were much more complex, fluid, and even ambivalent which made it possible for subjects to draw on many conflicting and often converging gender models at the same time to traverse certain social constraints surrounding gender construction(s) and representation(s) (Økland 2004, 77, 182; Vander Stichele and Penner 2009, 64). The four models, as described by Økland (2004, 48) although having important differences between them, depict man to be the primary human standard in the gender system that predominated in ancient Mediterranean society of the first and second centuries. As Økland points out,

Even if the one-sex-model was current from ‘classical’ times onwards, it seems that it did not nourish greater plurality in representations of men and women. It existed within the same discourse as the ‘Pandora model’ or the other ‘orthodox’ Greek model of gender where women were considered as fertile soil or nature that ‘man the farmer’ was obliged to plow and fertilize in analogy to his field. Such models of gender seem to have conceptually narrowed in the possibilities of moving back and forth on the gender-continuum of the one-sex-model, so that these possibilities were made culturally and politically unavailable (Økland 2004, 48).

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<sup>39</sup>The Genesis creation account seems to support this two sexed gender model which is in line with Jewish construction(s) and representation(s) of gender. For further discussion of Jewish notions of gender, dealing with issues pertaining to the construction(s) of gender and its representation(s) within Jewish culture, particularly using Rabbinic discursive sources see Corley (1996); Wiley (2005); Banks (2007); and Farley (2008).

<sup>40</sup>For a discussion of these three aetiological models, see Økland (2004, 41–46). Cf. Zeitlin (1995, 58–74).

What becomes evident from the gender models that are discussed above is that the emerging picture of gender as constructed and conceptualised in the ancient Mediterranean civilisation of the first and second centuries was founded upon and inscribed on androcentrism and phallogentrism. Indeed all the dominant gender models of antiquity as presented in this chapter somehow prioritise man, including the spaces, morals, and bodies embodied by that term to be superior to woman and the spaces, morals, and bodies enmeshed in this term. Also it is worth noting that the above mentioned gender models were in one way or another cosmological in that ancient people perceived the gendered context of their time either with cosmogonic discourses or with arguments verified by analogies set out to explain the cosmos as Økland (2004, 236) maintains.

## **2. The “Ideal” Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in the Ancient Mediterranean**

The importance of the body to the broader gendered context needs to be clarified before any further discussion regarding the ideal construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) ensues. The main reason for this is the priority of the human body or bodiliness as the primary cite of habituation upon which gender was mapped in the ancient gendered context. In order to achieve this goal the immediately ensuing discussion is aimed at briefly delineating the notion of the ancient body within the broader ancient Mediterranean gendered context. This is important as ancient bodies and the constructedness of these bodies informed, and are informed by, the gender models that have been discussed above.

The ancient body had, firstly, a primary role in constructing and representing gender, in that it was mapped primarily as the initial marker upon which gender was located from a sexual reproductive perspective and in this regard may be considered “foundational” as Johnson (1987, xix) has argued.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, the ancient body also functioned in an alternate capacity in that other social and cultural construction(s) and representation(s) mapped themselves onto the ancient body, and in fact gendered the body beyond, and even more profoundly than, the initial sexual reproductive clues that were ascribed to bodiliness at birth. In this regard the body also functioned as a cite for meaning making, or stated differently, the body was an “organ of meaning” (Gleason 2001, 305).

In light of this hegemonic gender ideology an infant’s gender was not regarded as fixed at birth and was not seen to be based upon anatomy solely but instead was formulated by a process of acculturation and gender construction (Gleason 1990, 412). Masculinity in -----

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Conway (2008, 16) and his notion of “incorporeity” that was viewed as the ultimate in masculine achievement.

particular, which was regarded as being established in nature,<sup>42</sup> was, however, believed to be malleable and imperfect until more concretely constructed by a rigorous process of performative acculturation.<sup>43</sup> Identifying that ancient Mediterranean people viewed bodies as a microcosm of society, Martin (1995b, 19) makes the important point,

Rather than trying to force ancient language into our conceptual schemes, we would do better to try to imagine how ancient Greeks and Romans could see as ‘natural’ what seems to us bizarre: the nonexistence of the ‘individual’, the fluidity of the elements that make up the ‘self’, and the essential continuity of the human body with its surroundings.

Within the gap between anatomical sex and constructed gender performance gender ambivalence or deviance could be found. The physiognomists, however, were skilled in deciphering the “corporeal vernacular” (Glancy 2010, 12) and found the signs to decode such gender ambivalence.<sup>44</sup> Braun (2002, 114) identifying the implicit androcentric gendered ideology in this physiognomic structure mentions that “the game was rigged”. The reason for this assertion by Braun (2002, 114) is because the bodies of women “would always convey that they were deficient precisely in those character qualities that would most ennoble them as full human beings because those character qualities were precisely those qualities that were physiologically represented in male bodies”.

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<sup>42</sup>As Laqueur (1990, 29) states, “Nature is not therefore to culture what sex is to gender, as in modern discussions; the biological is not, even in principle, the foundation of particular social arrangements”. Nature in this regard should be interpreted rather as culture or convention. In fact the term nature has often been used as “norm enforcing language” in order to authorise and prescribe a facet of culture (Winkler 1990b, 69). Cf. Winkler (1990b, 21, 24, 39–40) and Glancy (2010, 13).

<sup>43</sup>For a delineation of the notion of performativity as applied to the contemporary discussion regarding the body and the construction of gender see Butler (2002, 48–50; 1993, ix–xii, xxi). The fluidity of bodily sex was founded upon a notion that bodily sex is contingent on virtue rather than on genitals. For an interesting discussion of this notion of the fluidity of bodily sex, see Økland (2004, 54).

<sup>44</sup>That bodies communicated in a language of their own has been identified by a number of scholars. Gleason (1990, 402) in her articulation of this phenomenon maintains that subjects “were taught to speak with their bodies”. Similarly Glancy (2004, 100), in her articulation of the ancient body and bodiliness has asserted that “bodies talk” and engage in a “corporeal vernacular” (Glancy 2010, 12), and in this regard the ancient body language was in fact a gendered language. Cf. Glancy (2010, 3) and her assertion that “bodies know” and have “corporeal knowledge”.



The notion of “bodily *hexis*” as posited by Bourdieu (1990, 69–70) also becomes useful in this regard to identify signposts of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the ancient Mediterranean. Bourdieu (1990, 69–70) defines “bodily *hexis*” as “political mythology realized, *em-bodied*, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking”. A case in point which demonstrates the dominant corporeal vernacular or bodily *hexis* of the ancient Mediterranean may be gleaned from the following extant text:

It is said that when he [Cleanthes] laid it down as Zeno’s opinion that a man’s character could be known from his looks, certain witty young men brought before him a rake with hands horny from toil in the country and requested him to state what the man’s character was. Cleanthes was perplexed and ordered the man to go away; but when, as he was making off, he sneezed, “I have it”, cried Cleanthes, “he is effeminate” (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. 7.5.173-174).

The paradox, according to Conway (2008, 18), regarding the construction and performance of masculinity was that although “the presence of male reproductive organs could not prove one’s manliness, there were other aspects about the body that could betray it”. Having a phallus did not equal or necessitate masculinity and other parts of the body had the potential to infringe on a subject’s masculinity. On this gendered continuum females could change into males, and men could slip down the gender hierarchy and degenerate into a soft, imperfect and feminine state (Laqueur 1990, 7).

In fact, gender was mapped onto ancient bodies and the performative body was taught to speak a gendered body language that would be in synchronisation with ideal notions of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) through a gruelling process of acculturation. This acculturating gendered body language began at birth through a rigorous and coercive process of naturalisation that was implemented either by the child’s mother or the wet nurse. This process of “gender-typing” as Gleason (1990, 402) calls it, or gendering, was accomplished either by massaging or swaddling which entailed, squeezing, stretching and sculpting each part of the body into what was considered appropriate to one’s gendered type. Quintilian, for

example, argues, “If a boy’s disposition is naturally dry and jejune, ought we not to feed it up or at any rate clothe it in fairer apparel?” (*Institutio Oratoria*. 2.8.9–11). Plato, regarding the role that nurses and mothers played in this gendering process, mentions that “we will induce nurses and mothers to tell (censored stories) to the children and so shape their souls by these stories far rather than their bodies by their hands” (*Republic*. 2.377b–c). Nurses were responsible for moulding the infant’s body and tutors were responsible for socialising the young child, as may be seen from a text by Plutarch, which states,

If men do not become better by teaching, the fee given to their tutors is wasted. For these are the first to receive the child when it has been weaned and, just as nurses mould its body with their hands, so tutors by the habits they inculcate train the child’s character to take a first step, as it were, on the path of virtue. . . . And yet what do tutors teach? To walk in the public streets with lowered head ; to touch salt-fish with but one finger, but fresh fish, bread, and meat with two ; to sit in such and such a posture ; in such and such a way to wear their cloaks (Plutarch, *Moralia* 6. *Can Virtue be Taught*. 439-440).

Subsequent to two months of remedial naturalisation the swaddling mechanisms for infants were progressively loosened. However, for older children the everyday reiterative gender sculpting process carried on through a gruelling process of performative acts that over time appeared natural (Rouselle 1988, 52–55; Gleason 1990, 403). Rouselle (1988, 52–55) indicates how physically forming the bodies of children, that is in making gender perform, this practice was adhered to on the advice of medical practitioners. In this way different discursive practices, medical, rhetorical, and philosophical functioned in tandem to form the “regulatory body” (Butler 1993, 1). To this end Gunderson (1998, 188) mentions that the ancient body was “always in a state of negotiation”. This reiterative and “corrective” process

of gendering continued during adolescents for boys through the stages of literary and rhetorical education, when the rhetorical performance and linguistic mastery that was the restricted domain of the elite male subject was constructed under the guidance, vigilance and often punishment of skilled educators (Aristophanes, *Clouds*. 961-1000).<sup>45</sup> According to Aristophanes,

If any of them [the students] were to play the buffoon, or to turn any quavers, like these difficult turns the present artists make after the manner of Phrynus, he used to be thrashed, being beaten with many blows, as banishing the Muses. And it behooved the boys, while sitting in the school of the Gymnastic-master, to cover the thigh, so that they might exhibit nothing indecent to those outside; then again, after rising from the ground, to sweep the sand together, and to take care not to leave an impression of the person for their lovers. And no boy used in those days to anoint himself below the navel; so that their bodies wore the appearance of blooming health. Nor used he to go to his lover, having made up his voice in an effeminate tone, prostituting himself with his eyes. Nor used it to be allowed when one was dining to take the head of the radish, or to snatch from their seniors dill or parsley, or to eat fish, or to giggle, or to keep the legs crossed (*Clouds*. 961).

The quintessential masculine virtue that was cultivated in the educational system and rhetorical schools of the time was modesty and self-control which was applicable to all areas of one's life (*Clouds* 986; Plutarch, *Moralia* 6. *Can Virtue be Taught*. 440).<sup>46</sup> As Quintilian observes, "I shall frequently be compelled to speak of such virtues as courage, justice, self-control; in fact scarcely a case comes up in which some one of these virtues is not involved" (*Institutio Oratoria*. 1.12). In fact even prior to attending the schools of the rhetoricians it was believed that the most basic quality of one who had any hopes of becoming a perfect

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<sup>45</sup>In relation to the question as to what age is best suited for a young boy to be schooled in the art of rhetoric and literature, Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria*. 2.1.7–8) remarked, "When he [the boy] is fit". In this regard the age of the boy was not the qualifier as to his admission into the educational system, but rather the maturity and progress that he was able to demonstrate to the rhetorician and his masculine potential.

<sup>46</sup>Cf. Plutarch (*Moralia* 6. *On Moral Virtue*. 440, 445).

orator was that such a person firstly was “a good man”. The litmus test for being “a good man” was that such a person displayed excellence of character (*Institutio Oratoria*. 1.12).

Another normative trait of ideal masculinity was rationality, and in accordance to the dominant notions surrounding the construction(s) of masculinity(ies) rationality was regarded as primarily a masculine enterprise. Quintilian maintains that “[r]easoning comes as naturally to man as flying to birds, speed to horses and ferocity to beasts of prey: our minds are endowed by nature with such activity and sagacity” (*Institutio Oratoria*. 11.1-11.2). Similarly Epictetus declared: “It were no slight attainment, could we merely fulfil what the nature of man implies. For what is man? A rational and mortal being” (*Discourses*. 2.9).<sup>47</sup>

The continuous performance in order to achieve ideal masculinity persisted throughout adulthood where adult free males from the elite echelons of society, engaged in a constant battle to construct and maintain the hegemonic “corporal vernacular” (Glancy 2010, 12) of masculinity espoused during that epoch.<sup>48</sup> This battling to maintain one’s gender meant continual observation and modulation of the whole of one’s life (Gunderson 1998, 185). Gleason (1995, 59) remarks that masculinity in the ancient world, “was an achieved state, radically underdetermined by anatomical sex”. Even the personal disposition of a public speaker, the strength, clarity and pitch of his voice, and his gestures were open to scrutiny, and any signs of unmanliness or deficient masculinity were denigrated (Plutarch, *Cicero*. 5.3–4).<sup>49</sup> Quintilian demonstrates this when he claims the following:

What use is it if we employ a lofty tone in cases of trivial import, a slight and refined style in cases of great moment, a cheerful tone when our matter calls for sadness, a gentle tone when it demands vehemence, threatening language when supplication, and submissive when energy is required, or fierceness and violence when our theme is one that asks for charm? Such

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<sup>47</sup>Cf. Xenophon (*Memorabilia*. 1.2.23).

<sup>48</sup>Cf. Gleason (1990, 389–416); Gunderson (1998, 183–188).

<sup>49</sup>I follow Conway (2008, 15) and his articulation of “unmen” in this regard.

incongruities are as unbecoming as it is for men to wear necklaces and pearls and flowing raiment which are the natural adornments of women, or for women to robe themselves in the garb of triumph, than which there can be conceived no more majestic raiment (*Institutio Oratoria*. 11 2.29–30).<sup>50</sup>

Public speaking skills were directly tied to notions of masculine construction and representation. And, because performance as a speaker was also gender performance, deficiency in presentation could impugn the speaker's masculinity and created an opening for a speaker's rivals to denounce him as feminine.<sup>51</sup> Even a man's chosen word order could be so criticised.<sup>52</sup> Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria*. 11.2.30) aptly notes, "For a man's character is generally revealed and the secrets of his heart are laid bare by his manner of speaking, and there is good ground for the Greek aphorism that, 'as a man lives, so will he speak'". With regards to the pitch of one's voice, Plutarch (*Cicero*. 3.5) mentions how a high pitched voice was noted by onlookers with apprehension and was even seen to be indicative of weak health. A soft or high-pitched voice, therefore, could seriously damage a speaker's chances of success. As a result voice training was considered a necessary form of exercise not only for improvement and maintenance of one's speech but for general well being.

Gleason (1995, 82–102) has observed the correlation between male health and masculinity, and asserts that this process was dependent upon the circulation of *pneuma*, a vital substance taken in through breathing and through the pores of the body. It was believed that speaking in low tones aided in the distribution of *pneuma*, while using a high-pitched voice constricted the *pneuma*. For this reason, men were cautioned to limit vocal exercises in which the pitch was progressively changed. Likewise, the "weaker" voices of children,

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<sup>50</sup>Cf. (*Institutio Oratoria*. 2 12.9–11). For further discussion of the hierarchical engendering of the Graeco-Roman world in relation to public speaking protocol and in particular how this was regarded as the domain of the male in which to construct masculine identity see Vorster (2003, 84–85). Vorster (2003, 84–85) discusses Quintilian's (*Institutio Oratoria*. 11.3.19–29) prescriptives on gesture, voice and the body of the orator as a construction of masculinity. He states, "the body of the orator is to body forth masculinity" (Vorster 2003, 84).

<sup>51</sup>Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1–3.

<sup>52</sup>For further primary text evidence in which a man's voice is thought to betray his display of ideal masculinity see Gleason (1995, 82–102) and Larson (2004, 88–90).

women, and eunuchs, as well as ill persons, were attributed to a deficiency of *pneuma* (Larson 2004, 90).<sup>53</sup> Like sickness, physical infirmity due to old age tended to be viewed as a “feminizing” disability (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.9,130-131). Male status, which was the prerogative of the citizen and the *Kύριος* or head of the household, was regarded as a function of age as well as of sex, dependent upon self-control, but also control over women, children and slaves (*Memorabilia*. 4.5.2–4; *Symposium*. 183b–184b).<sup>54</sup> As Skinner (1997a, 135) explains, “To maintain that status, constant physiological and psychological vigilance was required”, and any loss of masculinity through old age, sickness, overindulgence, or any lapse of moral virtue or anything that would weaken one’s social status could diminish one’s masculinity and cause “reversion to a passive womanish condition”.

According to ancient notions on ideal masculinity, certain bodily characteristics were regarded as masculine, and real men could be identified by aspects such as “stout chest, a clear complexion, broad shoulders, a little tongue, large hips, little lewdness” (Aristophanes, *Clouds*. 1009). On the opposite side of this gendered typology men who were less masculine could be identified by the following characteristics according to Aristophanes (*Clouds*. 1009) : “a pallid complexion, small shoulders, a narrow chest, a large tongue, little hips, great lewdness, a long psephism”. Epictetus (*Discourses*. 3.1) claims that men who dress like women and attempt to look young and boyish behave contrary to nature. He recounts a story in which a young rhetorician came to him with ornamented hair and elaborate dress and responded to him as follows:

If you make yourself such a character, you know that you will make yourself beautiful; but while you neglect these things, though you use every contrivance to appear beautiful, you—

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<sup>53</sup>For further discussion and an array of primary text evidence in which rhetorical attack and defence was synonymous with the battle to maintain ideal masculinity and that mentions how voice and the use of this mechanism was a signpost of normative masculinity, see among many others Winkler (1990a, 171–209), Harrill (2001, 201–209) and Larson (2004, 85–97).

<sup>54</sup>Cf. Philo (*Special Laws*. 3.169–175).

must necessarily be deformed. Well, what other appellations have you? Are you a man or a woman? A man. Then adorn yourself as a man, not as a woman. A woman is naturally smooth and delicate, and if hairy, is a monster, and shown among the monsters at Rome. It is the same thing in a man not to be hairy; and if he is by nature not so, he is a monster. But if he depilates himself, what shall we do with him? Where shall we show him, and how shall we advertise him? “A man to be seen, who would rather be a woman”. What a scandalous show! (*Discourses*. 3.1).

The point of Epictetus’ discourse is that the archetypal quality to strive for that should beautify one, if indeed one sought beautification, would be the character of human excellence and temperance. Epictetus’ rhetoric, however, also gives an insightful glimpse into the dominant notions of gender construction(s) and representation(s) as mapped onto the ancient masculine body through proper comportment. The continual performance of masculinity and the concomitant threat of failure to maintain a masculine status and, therefore, descend to an effeminate state of being was a very real concern for men during this epoch. Winkler (1990b, 50) in fact has compared ancient constructions of masculinity to that of warfare, and asserts that masculinity as constructed in this epoch was “a duty and a hard-won achievement”. What becomes immediately noticeable then from the above discussion is a constant strain to acquire and maintain ideal masculinity in the face of such exacting cultural standards. In a social world where a suitable degree of masculinity was necessitated and analysed through one’s bodily *hexis* and through a set of complex enculturating performative processes that, however evident in daily aspects such as one’s gaze, walk, talk, and gesture, had never to appear “put on” (Gleason 1990, 410).

### 3. The “Ideal” Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Femininity(ies) in the Ancient Mediterranean

Within the first and second century Mediterranean world honour and shame were regarded as the core cultural values. Honour was considered a claim to worth along with the social recognition of that worth. It functioned as a social barometer that enabled a person or group to interact in particular ways with his or her or their equals, superiors, and subordinates, in response to prescribed, though often implicit cultural cues. There were two types of honour, namely, ascribed honour and, acquired honour. Ascribed honour came about or happened to a person or group passively through birth, family relations, or endowment by distinguished persons of power. In contrast acquired honour was honour vigorously sought after and acquired mainly at the detriment of one's equals in the social contest of challenge and response (Malina 1981, 47). But honour and shame also came about by adhering to the normative social and cultural constraints with respect to gender construction and representation. Shame, on the other hand, refers to the public rejection or denial of honour and being shamed refers to a loss of honour in the public domain (Plevnik 1993, 96). This may be demonstrated by an extant example taken from Philo. Philo says,

But when men are abusing one another or fighting, for women to venture to run out under pretense of assisting or defending them, is a blameable action and one of no slight shamelessness . . . Moreover, if any woman, hearing that her husband is being assaulted, being out of her affection for him carried away by love for her husband, should yield to the feelings which overpower her and rush forth to aid him, still let her not be so audacious as to behave like a man, outrunning the nature of a woman; but even while aiding him let her continue a woman. For it would be a very terrible thing if a woman, being desirous to deliver her husband from an insult, should expose herself to insult, by exhibiting human life as full of shamelessness and liable to great reproaches for her incurable boldness (*Special. Laws.* 3.169–175).



The text delineates a narrative in which a woman's bodiliness is mapped out and limited to the interiority of the household, and she is compelled by the hegemonic cultural constitutive constraint at the threat of being shamed (negative shame) due to overstepping her genders role and acting in a "manly" manner even when the safety or life of her beloved husband was at stake.<sup>55</sup> If she were to act, and thereby denigrate the cultural delimitations inscribed upon her body and position herself outside of the gendered demarcation and space constructed by discursive praxis (and in so doing reject the normative engendering of the dominant gender ideology that was enforced upon her bodiliness), this performative action would ultimately lead to the shaming (negative shame) of her husband. The reason for this is not only because the husband could not defend his own bodily inviolability from penetration and abuse, and not primarily even because he needed to be defended by a woman.<sup>56</sup> Rather the chief reason for his shame would be because he would be viewed by onlookers and those who would come to hear of this shameful act as being unable to control and constrain the body of his wife. According to the cultural logic of the dominant gendered system(s), she was his responsibility to control. In fact, this type of control, was regarded as one of the ideal constructions of masculinity and any lapses in this regard, would be seen as a feminine infringement upon the construction of his masculinity.

The distinction of honour and shame reflects the basic androcentric and kyriarchal ideology of the hegemonic gender context that places emphasis on male honour and female shame and played a pivotal role in the construction(s) and representation(s) of what was construed as ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in this ancient context. Shame in this regard implies a positive symbol, meaning a person's sensitivity to the perceptions, spoken opinions, and actions of others with regard to his or her honour. Within the first and second

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<sup>55</sup>For other primary texts that map feminine bodies to the interior of the household see, Valerius Maximus (*Memorable Deeds and Saying*. 6.3.9-12). Also see Økland (2004, 77) for further discussion regarding gendered spaces of the ancient Mediterranean and how gender is interwoven with the different spaces of the ancient city and in the structures of their organization.

<sup>56</sup>Skinner (2005, 195) defines bodily inviolability as the legal protection that adult citizen males had "from sexual penetration, beating, and torture". For further discussion of this notion of the impenetrability of male Roman citizens, see, Walters (1997, 29-46) and Skinner (Skinner 2005, 195).

century Mediterranean world, for an individual to have shame in this regard was regarded as an extremely positive value and implied acceptance and adherence to the demarcated social and cultural rules of communication (Malina 1981, 44,48; Moxnes 1996, 20).

Thus, people obtained honour by personally seeking a particular social status or adhering to a particular social status that was regarded as appropriate to one's gendered identity (and also class, race and ethnicity) and reciprocally having that status socially validated. Alternatively, people were shamed when they sought a particular social status, and this status was disallowed by public opinion, or when they behaved in ways that were viewed as contrary to the normative notions pertaining to gender construction(s) and representation(s). At the realisation that a person was being denied status, he or she was shamed, or experienced shame and was dishonoured for seeking an honour to which they were not socially entitled.

Honour evaluations were embodied and shifted from the interiority of the body to the exteriority of the body. The internal aspect was directly shaped by a person's honour claims, whereas the external aspect was shaped by social legitimation or acculturation. The latter occurred by means of public validation and shame evaluations and shifted from the exterior (public denial) to the interior (a person's identification of the rejection). To be shamed, therefore, was to be hindered in one's personal quest to achieve social worth or status. Perhaps more importantly, however, shame was a gendered social constraint which was mapped onto bodies inscribing onto them a particular ideal performativity of gender in congruence to their bodiliness. This was further influenced by other intersectional aspects such as social status, race, religion, and ethnicity. It is hardly surprising, given the androcentric gendered context, that shame was gendered feminine. And very often, men were ridiculed for reverting to a womanish state when they rejected or disobeyed what society deemed normative for the "proper" construction of masculinity(ies).

The ancient gender distribution of labour was based upon a complex set of gender specific responsibilities and functions. The public, outdoor responsibilities, were designated for males only and the private, household tasks, were ideally for females only.<sup>57</sup> Whereas males were socialised to participate in public activities such as teaching, trade, commerce, food production and soldiering,<sup>58</sup> women were socialised into the gendered roles of childbearing, child raising, food preparation, and household management. According to one ancient text that depicts this enculturation, three Spartan women were being sold as slaves and were asked what they were best at. The first answered that she knew “to be faithful”. The second remarked, “to manage a house well”. The third woman when “asked by a man if she would be good if he bought her, said, ‘Yes, and if you do not buy me’” (Plutarch, *Moralia* 3. *Sayings of Spartan Women*. 242,27-29). Plutarch demonstrates the general marginalisation of women and also a typical gendered ideology when he asserts: “[T]he best woman is she about whom there is the least talk among persons outside regarding either censure or commendation, feeling that the name of the good woman, like her person, ought to be shut up indoors and never go out” (*Moralia* 3. *Bravery of Woman*, 243).<sup>59</sup>

Childbearing was a common representation of normative femininity in the wider society of the first-second century Mediterranean world. This may be seen in the following comment from Plutarch:

When a woman from Ionia showed vast pride in a bit of her own weaving, which was very valuable, a Spartan woman pointed to her four sons, who were most well-behaved, and said,

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<sup>57</sup>Scholars have demonstrated that the seeming exclusion of women may have “represented a male desideratum more than actual practice” (1998, 271,n.67). Winkler (1990b) cautions us to differentiate between prescriptive discourse and social reality when investigating ancient androcentric texts. He mentions that “most of men’s observations and moral judgments about women and sex and so forth have minimal descriptive validity and are best understood as coffeehouse talk, addressed to men themselves” (Winkler 1990b, 6). Cf. Punt (2013b, 160). Although mindful to be somewhat cautious and flexible in this regard, I tend to follow Conway (2008, 16) on this point when she mentions that “[e]ven if this picture of manliness [and femaleness] did not represent the lived reality of most men [and women] in the empire, it had an effect on them”. Any notion of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in the New Testament, therefore, has to be analysed alongside this dominant gendered ideology (Conway 2008, 16; contra Baumert 1996, 180).

<sup>58</sup>See Malina & Neyrey (1996, 179–181) and Moxnes (1996, 19–20) for further discussion of these male roles.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Demosthenes (*Against Neaera*. 122).

“Such should be the employments of the good and honourable woman, and it is over these that she should be elated and boastful” (Plutarch, *Moralia* 3. *Sayings of Spartan Women*. 241,9).

Demosthenes (*Against Neaera*, 122) further supports the notion of seeing childbearing as the archetypal representation of a modest or typical Graeco-Roman wife (and also what all women were to aspire to), when he says, “For this is what living with a woman as one’s wife means—to have children by her . . . Mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of our persons, but wives to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households”.

Not only was it regarded as shameful for women to be barren and repugnant for a young girl to die without fulfilling her “gender’s goals,” but the Roman state also enforced legislation that coerced women and men to have children or suffer the legal penalties and social vituperation that went with childlessness and disobedience (Pomeroy 1975, 166; Winter 2003, 53).<sup>60</sup> The imperfection of women in relation to men was also noted in the longevity of their respective reproductive activities. Women were deemed to cease to be effective, in this manner, at a much younger age than men. For this reason women inhabited or bore insufficiency in their very beings so much so that imperfection in relation to the masculine was inscribed into their bodiliness in one of the more basic manners in which women served as “useful”. Thus the inferior duration in which they were deemed to be “useful” from a reproductive perspective was a topic of discussion as Pliny shows:

Women cease to bear children at their fiftieth year, and, with the greater part of them, the monthly discharge ceases at the age of forty. But with respect to the male sex, it is a well-known fact, that King Masinissa, when he was past his eighty-sixth year, had a son born to him, whom he named Metimanus, and that Cato the Censor, after he had completed his

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<sup>60</sup>See Winter (2003, 39–58) for further delineation on this subject. Cf. Skinner (2005, 206).

eightieth year, had a son by the daughter of his client, Salonius: a circumstance from which, while the descendants of his other sons were surnamed Liciniani, those of this son were called Saloniani, of whom Cato of Utica was one. It is equally well known, too, that L. Volusius Saturninus, who lately died while prefect of the city, had a son when he was past his seventy-second year, by Cornelia, a member of the family of the Scipios, Volusius Saturninus, who was afterwards consul. Among the lower classes of the people, we not uncommonly meet with men who become the fathers of children after the age of seventy-five (*The Natural History*, 12.14).

Another way for women to construct ideal femininity was by abiding by the cultural imperatives that governed the outward ostentation in women. Overly ostentatious displays were denigrated, while simplicity was praised as highly desirable. The virtue of self-control above all else was inculcated as most admirable. This may be seen in Plutarch's correspondence to his wife at the time of their daughter's death. Plutarch extols his wife's virtue when he writes,

But this was no surprise to me, that you, who have never decked yourself out at theatre or procession, but have regarded extravagance as useless even for amusements, should have preserved in the hour of sadness the blameless simplicity of your ways; for not only . . . must the virtuous woman remain uncorrupted; but she must hold that the tempest and tumult of her emotion in grief requires continence no less, a continence that does not resist maternal affection . . . whereas the never-sated passion for lamentation, a passion which incites us to transports of wailing and of beating the breast, is no less shameful than incontinence in pleasures (Plutarch, *Moralia* 7. *Consolation to His Wife*. 608-609).

He further praises his wife when he says,

For, on the one hand, your plainness of attire and sober style of living has without exception amazed every philosopher who has shared our society and intimacy, neither is there any townsman of ours to whom at religious ceremonies, sacrifices, and the theatre you do not

offer another spectacle—your own simplicity (Plutarch, *Moralia* 7.*Consolation to His Wife*.

609).

From the above discussion it may be seen that certain cultural roles such as marriage, childbearing and household management were perceived as normative constructions of femininity for people living in the ancient Mediterranean from the period around the first and second century. It has also been demonstrated that culture served as a legitimising constraint that maintained these ideologically gendered constructions and representations and ensured that these acts were regarded as normative.

## Conclusion

As can be seen from the above discussion, within ancient Mediterranean civilisation, gender was regarded as part of an “orchestrated cosmic structure”, and any deviation from this “cosmic structure” would lead to chaos if the natural “gender boundaries” and delimitations were unsettled (Økland 2004, 1).<sup>61</sup> The above discussion has similarly highlighted the fact that nature, was often culture dressed up as “nature”, or rather, “nature” was used to validate culture. Needless to say gender delimitations formed the foundation of an “ideal” ancient Mediterranean society and gender was integrated into all areas of life, so that it strictly demarcated all aspects of life in ancient society. The hegemonic ancient Mediterranean notions surrounding gender construction(s) and representation(s) appear to have been based upon a general pattern of phallogocentrism and gender asymmetry. Given the patriarchal and androgynous cultural systems that governed that era, this kind of hegemony is hardly surprising.

During this epoch, men and women were seen to habituate certain “natural” gendered characteristics. Masculinity was ideally regarded among other stereotypically masculine characteristics as strong, brave, rational, and reserved. Women on the other hand, were

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<sup>61</sup>Cf. Stegemann and Stegemann (1999, 361).

ideally seen as weak, fearful, emotional and uncontrolled (Philo, *Questions and Answers on Exodus*. 1.8). Accordingly, the expectation of gender-specific role behaviour was extremely high. Any exchange of male and female roles was highly frowned upon. Such exchanges evoked shame (negative feminine shame) and were regarded as a contravention of one of the primary standards of ancient Mediterranean society. Some women and men, however, did bypass the general gender designated roles as delineated in prescriptive male elitist texts and discourses that governed their lives, and some women even excelled in the ideally masculine space of the public sphere of commerce and politics (Pomeroy 1975, 172–173; Winkler 1990b).<sup>62</sup>

When certain women fulfilled and excelled in such male dominated gender roles they were, however, defined in male gender terms. This merely served to reinforce the andronormative and hegemonic gender norms of the time period, as we have seen in Galen and others discussed above. It appears, however, that such phenomenon was the exception to the “ideal” norm of ancient gender construction(s), or at least most of the ancient discursive discourses investigated in this chapter represent it that way. In ancient Mediterranean society it was a customary practice and belief, at least according to discursive sources, that women’s proper role was to be lived out in the private, female sphere of life, and men were to live out their lives in the public, male sphere of life (Winkler 1990b, 163–164; Malina and Neyrey 1996, 177,179).<sup>63</sup> Such separation of space demonstrates that even space was gendered as Økland (2004) has succinctly demonstrated.<sup>64</sup> Any deviation by both women and men from such basic cultural assumptions would lead to their shaming and possible prosecution by the state for transgressing state instituted regulations (Balch 1981, 52–53; Winter 2003, 91–94).

In this chapter my main aim has been to sketch how gender was constructed and represented in the ancient Mediterranean culture from the first and second century. I maintain

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<sup>62</sup>Cf. Winter (2003, 173–204).

<sup>63</sup>The gendered roles and gendered spaces mentioned are essentially theoretical prescriptions that were generally adhered to. There were, however, exceptions to these norms. See, for example, Stegemann (1999) and (Winter 2003).

<sup>64</sup>Økland (2004, 1) has demonstrated the gendered nature of space in ancient Mediterranean society.

that in order to investigate gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians, it has been necessary first to place this text within a broader ancient Mediterranean context of gender which serves to buttress my analysis of gendered identity in 1 Corinthians. Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 102) have argued, “It was within the broader cultural sphere that early Christian discourses took shape, and it was from there that categories and language were drawn to formulate argumentative strategies and bodily identities”. It is within this tapestry of ancient gender ideology and the dominant gender models as represented and discussed in this chapter that my investigation of 1 Corinthians will commence. The next chapter of this thesis will aim to investigate the construction(s) and representation(s) of male gender identity(ies) as delineated in the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians.



## **Chapter 4:**

### **The Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians**

#### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter my goal was to locate 1 Corinthians within a wider ancient Mediterranean context of gender which serves to foreground my analysis of male and female gender construction(s) and representation(s) in the text. This current chapter is aimed at investigating how masculinity(ies) is constructed and represented within the text of 1 Corinthians. In order to achieve this aim I will engage in an analysis of male gender construction(s) and representation(s) in 1 Corinthians under four sub sections. Before specifying the four sub-sections, however, it will be useful to remind ourselves of rhetography and rhetology as SRI analytical tools since these concepts provide a very useful link for identifying the performativity of masculinity(ies) as argued in this chapter.

Rhetography refers to the visual imagery or pictorial narrative and scene construction contained in rhetorical depiction (Robbins 2004a:17–18; 2009:6, 16). This “progressive, sensory-aesthetic, and/or argumentative texture of a text (rhetology)” allows “a hearer/reader to create a graphic image or picture in the mind that implies a certain kind of truth and/or reality” (Robbins 2009:xxvii).<sup>1</sup> In a similar manner as in the case of implementing rhetography as a useful analytical category, I will demonstrate that the rhetology of the discourse in 1 Corinthians in many places constitutes construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in the text and in so doing replicates a particular gendered structuring and performativity. My intention in implementing the analytical categories of rhetography and rhetology is to facilitate the investigation of the implicit gendered scripts that lie beneath the surface of the text. It is not my intention to programmatically apply these interpretive terminologies to my investigation or to differentiate between rhetography and rhetology in

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<sup>1</sup> His emphasis.

each passage of 1 Corinthians that comes under scrutiny in the analysis that follows below. This would imply that a primary concern in my thesis is to demonstrate a somewhat programmatic proficiency for SRI as a research analytics. My concern in this thesis, however, is to make visible the constructedness of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) to which end I employ aspects of SRI that assist me to make possible this problematisation without having to be programmatic in my deployment of it. Rhetography in particular, has allowed me to identify the hidden script of gendered machinations, the socio-political structure that configured bodies according to regulatory schemas and gender normativities that pervaded the ancient Mediterranean world.

Rhetology refers to “the logic of rhetorical reasoning” (Robbins 2009, 16). Robbins (2009, xxvii) maintains that rhetology creates assertions verified by explanation and rationale; made clear by antitheses and contraries; supported by “analogies, comparisons, examples (rhetography); and confirmed by authoritative testimony in a context either of stated conclusions or of progressive texture that invites a hearer/reader to infer a particular conclusion” (Robbins 2009, xxvii). Robbins (2009, 6) notes that early Christians reconfigured many forms of discourses by “blending” together rhetography with rhetology in ways that formed distinct “social, cultural, ideological, and religious modes of understanding and belief in the Mediterranean world”. Furthermore he clarifies that the speaker and audience form an important function of the rhetography as they intersectionally operate with the reasoning (rhetology) of the text. Rhetology, however, also relies on vivid imagery (rhetography) to form its rhetorical functions. This demonstrates the significance of working “with the interrelation of rhetology and rhetography in analysis and interpretation of early Christian argumentation” (Robbins 2009, 17).

It is my contention that a blending of rhetology and rhetography happens in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. Commenting on the Revelation to John, Robbins (2009, 88) points to a “merger of rhetology and rhetography” and argues, “When picture and story become so thoroughly blended with reasoning that the reasoning evokes the pictures and the story, and the pictures and the story evoke the reasoning, then the discourse has become truly

remarkable and powerful” This comes about as the gendered language in 1 Corinthians creates a picture in the mind of the Corinthians.

Robbins (2009, xxvii) does not, however, directly indicate that rhetology and rhetography in early Christian writings may also imply a highly gendered and complex intersectionality that blends together rhetology and rhetography and relies upon gendered discourses taken from the sex and gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean to construct its argumentation. Robbins (2009, 87) mentions the ubiquitous absence of vocabulary to delineate rhetography in many places in biblical interpretation and calls for a “complete set of terms to describe rhetography and rhetology throughout biblical tradition”. New terminology is introduced in relation to some of the more established terms, examples of which are, “eschatography - verbal description of vivid events concerning the end-time; cosmography - vivid description of regions of the cosmos.” (Robbins 2009, 87). A possible new terminology to describe the vivid depiction of rhetography that is engendering or gendered could perhaps be classified as “genderography”. This “genderography” will be alluded to in my analysis in this chapter as this also created distinct “modes of understanding and belief” (Robbins 2009, 6) that is integral to understanding the discourse of 1 Corinthians.

In this chapter I will argue that a large component of the argumentation in 1 Corinthians involves rhetography that would have created primarily masculine images in the minds of first century people, whether Christian or not. By doing this the argument replicates the normative construction(s) and representation(s) of gender as “truth and/or reality” in the minds of the readers.<sup>2</sup> For example, 1 Cor. 4:14-21 immediately creates the image of a functioning household of the socially prominent with its παιδαγωγός under the *paterfamilias*.

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<sup>2</sup> Robbins (2009, 16) mentions the relevance of investigating the “picturing of people”, particularly when interpretation starts to zoom in on bodies. At this juncture it becomes integrally important to work with rhetography. He asserts, “Very different kinds of persuasion are in process when a speaker calls a person a teacher, a prophet, a priest, a military general, a heavenly ruler, or a liar, a deceiver, a fornicator, a wolf, or a beast” (Robbins 2009, 16-17). For the purposes of my discussion, some more items may be added to the list, namely, a rhetorician, a father, children, a husband, and a wife. It will soon become evident from some of the passages that will be explored in this chapter and also in chapter five that the rhetographic scenario constructed by the implementation of these images also plays a pivotal role in supporting the rhetology of the discourse in 1 Corinthians.

They are invited through rhetoric, the argument of the text, to see Paul as the *paterfamilias* who has the power over them as their progenitor in the gospel.

The four sub-sections under which I will discuss the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) may be seen as follows: (2.1) wisdom and rhetorical performance as construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians; (2.2) father-children metaphors as construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians; (2.3) sexual congress and the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians; and (2.4) imitation as construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians.

It should be noted that the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians is not limited only to the four sub-sections that are covered in this chapter or the passages that are addressed in those sub-sections.<sup>3</sup> In fact, gendered argumentation and engendering, may be seen in many other texts in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. Furthermore, I do not limit my analysis to texts that only specifically mention “man” as a *topos* of inquiry, but instead, I will look more closely at the rhetorical performances of masculinity(ies) within the discourse of the texts. Pauline texts are gendered not merely in the way in which they address “men” and “women” directly, but also in the way arguments are constructed in terms of engendering. I have opted to present my discussion of the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) by focussing on the four sub-sections sketched above as I deem it sufficient to prove my point in this chapter. Similarly, in chapter five, my choice of which passages to investigate (e.g., mother-infant metaphors in 1 Cor. 3:1-4) and which to exclude, has been determined by this same reasoning. I have opted to investigate the texts

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<sup>3</sup> For further discussion of the work done by others who have contributed to investigations that also play a role in constructing and representing masculinity(ies) see the following list. In the area of slave imagery and slavery see Ste Croix (1975, 1–38); Foucault (1985, 187–225); Martin (1990, 48–85, 132–137); Moore (1996, 99; 2001, 150–160); Osiek and Balch (1997, 174–192); Moore and Anderson (1998, 262); Harrill (2001, 189–213; 2006); Larson (2004, 85–97); Marchal (2008); Liew (2011, 137); Punt (2013b, 149–169; 2013c, 36–42). In the area of athletic imagery see Pfitzner (1967, 16–17); Witherington (1992, 214, 215); Skinner (1997a, 111); Winter (2002, 170); Moore and Anderson (1998, 253–254, 261, 272); Moore (2001, 135–146, 165). In the area of body/bodiliness see Mitchell (1991, 104, 16–162); Corrington (1991, 223–231); Martin (1995b); May (2004, 135–143); Vander Stichele and Penner (2005a, 287–310).

that most ostensibly partner with and pick up on the gendered themes that I discuss in this current chapter (e.g., father-children metaphors in 1 Cor. 4:14-21, and imitation in 4:16; 11:1) and that also continues in chapter six above. It is my contention that this allows me to problematise the gendered issues that I wish to address while at the same time serving to merge together my argumentation in a coherent and succinct manner in this thesis.

I will demonstrate that the rhetorical arguments used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians are based upon and exude noticeable signs from the hegemonic gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean of the first to second century. These implicit gendered nuances may be seen in the shape of normative patriarchal cultural values (e.g., honour and shame) and commonplace cultural motifs (e.g., males/public space and women/private space) which were used by Paul to script men and women in the Corinthian congregation(s) to perform according to the regulatory schemas of the dominant gendered system(s), often replicating normative gendered structurings. As Punt (2010, 145) asserts, “The bodies of women and men may be viewed as the contested site for scripting and inscribing gender norms and hierarchies from the dominant Graeco-Roman world”.<sup>4</sup> Intertextual analysis as delineated by SRI (Robbins 1996b, 40–69; Robbins 1996a, 30–33) will assist me conceptually in this regard as I attempt to articulate how 1 Corinthians exudes implicit gendered signs that construct and represent performances of masculinity(ies) in the text and also possibly why Paul uses these phenomena in his discourse.<sup>5</sup>

In compliance with the requirements of SRI, however, it seems fitting to first investigate the rhetorical structure and situation that is being addressed in the letter as this will provide a general overview for my analysis and also serves to set the stage against which construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) will be investigated.

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<sup>4</sup> Also see Glancy (2010, 3, 9) and her notion that bodies have corporal knowledge and are sites for meaning making.

<sup>5</sup> Further discussion of intertexture will be explicated under sub-heading two in this chapter. For now it is worthwhile to merely bring our attention to this aspect.

## 1. The Rhetorical Structure of 1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians is a multi layered rhetorical structure with numerous rhetorical units and several sub-arguments. Hester (1994, 9) notes four argumentative units within the letter, namely, 1:11-6:11; 6:12-11:1; 11:2-14:40; and 15:1-58; with a introductory section, 1:1-10; and a concluding section, 16:1-24.<sup>6</sup> Mitchell (1991, 1–5, 49, 184–185, 209–210) regards the letter as a solitary deliberative argument by Paul aimed at maintaining unity in the Corinthian church.<sup>7</sup> She maintains that 1 Corinthians 1:10 sketches the thesis statement of the argument with 1:11-17 providing the statement of the facts of the case.<sup>8</sup> According to her analysis, the argument has four separate sections of proof, namely, 1:18-4:21; 5:1-11:1; 11:2-14:40; and 15:1-57 (Mitchell 1991, 184–185).<sup>9</sup>

Heil (2005, 10–14) divides Paul’s letter into six main essays. His division is as follows: First Rhetorical Demonstration: 1 Cor 1:18-4:21; Second Rhetorical Demonstration: 1 Cor 5:1-7:40, Third Rhetorical Demonstration 1 Cor 8:1-11:1; Fourth Rhetorical Demonstration: 1 Cor 11:2-34; Fifth Rhetorical Demonstration: 1 Cor 12:1-14:40; Sixth Rhetorical Demonstration: 1 Cor 15:1-58. Belleville (1987, 15–37) notes a connection between 1:4-9 and the remainder of the letter, and treats it as being composed in four sections. She views the thanksgiving of 1:4-9 as referring to “enrichment in all speech, enrichment in all knowledge, not lacking in any spiritual gift [and] the day of our Lord Jesus (Christ)” (Belleville 1987, 15–37). Furthermore she regards the content of the letter to be dealing with “speech problems (chapters 1-4), knowledge problems (chapters 5-10), spiritual gift problems (chapters 12-14) [and] resurrection problems” (chapter 15) (Belleville 1987, 11,  
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<sup>6</sup> Wuellner (1979, 184–185) suggests that 1 Corinthians functions as epideictic rhetoric with the first argumentative unit ending at 6:11.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Wanamaker (2006, 340).

<sup>8</sup> Contra Fee (1987, 47–48) who cautions against interpretations that fail to see the complexity of argumentation in the letter and argues against oversimplification. Also see Collins (1999, 20–21) and Given (2001, 93) who agree with the postulation that 1 Corinthians 1:10 should be regarded as the thesis statement for the entire letter. Cf. Thiselton (2000, 33–34).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Plank (1987, 12); Castelli (1991a, 98–111); and Wanamaker (2003b, 121).

21). In a different manner, Witherington (1995, 76) claims that the *probatio* comprises nine distinct sections, with a “pertinent digression or *egressio*” evident in both chapters 9 and 13.

What these rhetorical approaches show, among other things, is the existence of a considerable diversity of opinions regarding the rhetorical structure of 1 Corinthians.<sup>10</sup> In spite of these rhetorical differences which highlight different parts of the text, 1 Corinthians as a whole is generally thematised by scholars in very similar ways (Collins 1999, 16–17; Thiselton 2000, 36–41). According to 1 Corinthians 4:17 Paul sent his delegate, Timothy, to Corinth to deal with certain doctrinal problems as well as to remind the Corinthian Christians about Paul’s teachings that at least some of them had repudiated.<sup>11</sup> According to 1 Corinthians the Corinthian congregation was confronted with a variety of ethical issues. There was an obvious concern about divisions within the community as different groups championed different leaders while Paul sought to reassert his own authority over the community (1:1-4:21). The divisions in the church led to paralysis when confronted by a moral outrage within the community (5:1-13) and to strife in the community spilling over into the public space of the law courts (6:1-11). Sexual immorality was also a major concern (6:12-20) and serious issues had arisen about the relations between women and men (7:1-40). Because of status differences in the community the problem of eating food sacrificed to idols posed a major problem that Paul sought to address (chapter 8:1-11:1). And about people’s conduct during worship (chapters 11-14), as well as the Lord’s Supper (chapter 11). The letter contains both encouraging and challenging words about exhibiting and using spiritual gifts within the congregation (chapters 12-14), and it also has the earliest teachings we possess regarding the resurrection (chapter 15). At the end of the letter there are some instructions about the collection for the saints in Jerusalem and about Apollos, the brother (chapter 16:1-12), followed by greetings and some final admonitions (Crocker 2004, 124; Wanamaker 2005b, 419).

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. May (2004, 2–3) who discusses the issue of units within the letter of 1 Corinthians, and how different scholars see units formed between different texts within the letter.

<sup>11</sup> The notion of Timothy as a delegate of Paul is taken from Johnson (1996, 105–210).

In 1 Cor. 1:10-17 Paul sets out the rhetorical exigency of the letter: Paul had learned of the emergence of what he considers to be factions within the church, and he claims these factions were proving highly contentious (1:11) to the extent that the body of Christ was being divided (1:13). In 1 Cor. 1:10 Paul begins addressing a key moral issue that impacts significantly on communal well-being, and forms the core issue addressed throughout the letter as Mitchell (1991, 65–83, 198–200) has clearly demonstrated. Martin (1990, 144) and Witherington (1992, 39–48) like Mitchell (1991) assert that a call for unity and the end of factionalism of the church at Corinth is the key issue addressed throughout the letter. Thiselton (2000, 33–34), however, argues that it is a mistake to take internal unity as the dominant subject matter of the letter. Rather he claims that a “*reproclamation of grace and the cross to Christian believers takes center stage*”.<sup>12</sup> Similarly Crocker (2004, 33) argues that the most important, overarching theme that structures the entire letter of 1 Corinthians and holds all of it together is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Anderson (1998) maintains that Mitchell (1991) is not always convincing in her attempt to relate the topics in Paul’s letter to a central theme of concord and against Mitchell’s thesis maintains that unity is not the only reason for the letter. In support of the thesis by Mitchell (1991), however, it has to be understood that her main purpose in chapter three of her book is to show that the content of 1 Corinthians is a series of arguments ultimately based on the subject of factionalism and concord, political issues entities appropriately treated by deliberative rhetoric.<sup>13</sup> She does not deny that many other actual subjects are in fact treated, but instead she wants to show how Paul’s treatment of each of these subjects is rooted in the overriding concern for concord (Mitchell 1991, 182, 296). This

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<sup>12</sup> His emphasis.

<sup>13</sup>For a useful explanation that traces the reasons for the factionalism within the Corinthian community see Komaravali (2007, 48–51). His initial discussion offers an overview of some of the main proponents who suggest that the reasons for the factionalism may be explained in terms of discrepancies regarding theological differences. Other possible reasons for factionalism may be found in the behaviour of the Corinthian elite. Theissen (1982, 54–55) traces the social divisions in the Corinthian community back to the relationship between the missionaries and those they baptised. Horrell (1996, 116–117) supports Theissen and suggests an analogous reason for the divisiveness and factionalism. Also see Pogoloff (1992, 100–104) and his suggestion that the dissensions leading to the factionalism came about due to competition for status. Cf. Welborn (1987, 87).



emphasis on unity within the discourse of 1 Corinthians will again be brought up later in this chapter with a keen interest upon how this may also be viewed as a call for the performance of masculinity(ies). Fiore (1985, 88, 94, 95) on the other hand believes that a double problem of factionalism and imperfect wisdom and judgment, in a unified exhortation, are addressed throughout the letter.

Meeks (1983, 117) and Hyldahl (1991, 25) maintain that Paul's main interest in 1 Corinthians 1-4 is the contention that had arisen between followers who championed Apollos as their leader and those who followed Paul. Accordingly, when Paul criticises human wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1:17-2:16, he simultaneously also attacks the followers of Apollos who ridiculed his preaching for not being rhetorically sophisticated in terms of standard oratorical expectations in antiquity (2:1-6) (Given 2001, 95–103). Winter (2002, 141) argues that Paul's Corinthian converts "formulated a sophistic conception of 'discipleship', which in turn exposed the churches to the inevitable problems of dissension and jealousy associated with the secular movement". Additionally Winter (2002, 141) claims that the factionalism in Corinth was further compounded by "the *modus operandi* of Apollos" who came to Corinth, after Paul's departure.<sup>14</sup> In Acts 18:24-28, Apollos is described as a powerful and persuasive rhetorician, who debated with the Jews regarding Jesus' messiahship. His debating dexterity and rhetorical acumen made an impression on Paul's Corinthian converts so much so that a number of them identified with him in an analogous manner as did those who were followers of sophists in secular society (Winter 2002, 172–179). It seems, therefore, according to Winter (2001, 31–43; 2002, 178–179) that the factionalism in the Corinthian community was founded upon the secular practices associated with sophists and their disciples that had infiltrated into the church.<sup>15</sup>

Faced with a situation of factionalism within the Christian community at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:11-13), Paul appeals for unity through concord among the Corinthian Christians. The language Paul uses, not only in 1 Cor. 1:10, but throughout 1:10-4:21, has been exhibited to

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<sup>14</sup> His emphasis.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Witherington (1995, 101, 104).

have familiar correlation with the well-known *topos* of political accord in antiquity (Welborn 1987, 85–111; Mitchell 1991, 68–111).<sup>16</sup> In 1 Cor. 1:11 Paul mentions that he had received a report from Chloe’s people about “contentions” (ἐριδεις) that had arisen in the community leading to divisions within it. Apparently Paul credited the problem of factionalism and the concomitant disputes over his own authority to various groups holding loyalty to external leaders such as himself, Apollos, and Peter (Crocker 2004, 26–27; Wanamaker 2006, 341).<sup>17</sup>

Even a casual reading of the text reveals that Paul is dealing with a sequence of problems that are pragmatic symptoms of the factionalism and divisiveness within the community at Corinth, and thus the rhetorical move in the letter proceeds from a seemingly general appeal for unity and concord in 1 Cor. 1:10–4:21 to an attempt to resolve specific instances that have caused conflict within the church. In fact it turns out to be a strategic, persuasive move on the part of Paul as 1 Cor. 3:1–4:21 is primarily about Paul’s position of pre-eminence in the community. The unifying factor for Paul, therefore, as he presents it, is his own authority as the founder of the community, a position that gives him a unique status with the Corinthians that cannot be usurped by other leaders and external figures (Wanamaker 2006, 339–364).

Wanamaker (2005a, 839–849) has demonstrated that the overall rhetographic image created by 1 Corinthians 7 concerns a dialogical communication process between Paul and the Corinthians around topics well known to both parties. Paul’s emphasis on his own self-authenticating opinions (1 Cor. 7:6, 12, 17, 25, 40) indicates that the intercommunication is not between equals but reflects a hierarchy of power and authority in which Paul’s views should direct the actions of the community. In a similar vein the gendered views that Paul

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<sup>16</sup> Hearon (2006, 607) commenting on 1 Cor. 1:10 notes that many members of the LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, intersexed) “communities will recognize this rhetorical strategy as a ploy to silence opposition by the suppression of differences for the sake of unity”.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Wire (1990b, 43); Hearon (2006, 608). Malina and Pilch (2006, 59) have demonstrated that there was an initial letter (1 Cor. 5:9) to which the Corinthians reacted as reported by Timothy in light of his visit there (1 Cor. 4:17). That report demonstrated the seeming arrogance of some in the Corinthian Jesus community. Consequently Chloe’s people (perhaps slaves; 1 Cor. 1:11) came to Paul with more news about the burgeoning reactions to the message he communicated, and this information flow was rounded off by a letter sent by some at Corinth (1 Cor. 7:1). 1 Corinthians is Paul’s reply to all the information he had received through the various channels (Malina and Pilch 2006, 59).

expresses come from a comparable ideological vantage point, in that Paul presents his views as authoritative for the community. Furthermore his construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the text, constructed mainly in terms of the hegemonic gender normativities of the ancient Mediterranean, script the actions of the community and creates replicated gendered structurings.

## **2. An Analysis of Male Gender Construction(s) and Representation(s) in 1 Corinthians**

In the next section of this chapter I will investigate how masculinity(ies) is constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. I will demonstrate that Paul appropriates some of the leading notions of masculinity(ies) from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture into his discourse in 1 Corinthians. According to Robbins (1996b, 58), texts share an interactive correlation with other cultures and create what he has termed cultural knowledge or “insider” knowledge. Robbins (1996b, 58) has further commented that this type of knowledge is recognised solely by people within a certain cultural context or by those familiar with it through some type of learning or interaction. It is my contention that the gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean can also be described in an analogous manner and implies familiarity with a “cultural gendered logic” of which Paul and the Corinthian community would have been aware. This suggests that the Corinthian congregation would have naturally understood Paul’s assertions in light of the normative and normalising gendered regulatory schemas of their world. The construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) would, therefore, evoke for his original audience the richly textured set of gendered associations as sketched out in the previous chapter. I will argue that the performance of masculinity(ies) is a feasible hermeneutical inference of Paul’s discourse in 1 Corinthians in light of the hegemonic gender ideology and further informed by cultural intertexture.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> For further discussion of the notion of cultural intertexture and the implementation of two sub textures and their significance as a tool to analyse the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians see chapter five of this thesis. In this current chapter I have only employed the thinking technology of cultural intertexture as a theoretical mechanism to facilitate my demonstration of the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians. In the next chapter I will implement the analytical tools that intertexture brings to my investigation in a more programmatic way. Some of the SRI related work in this

Intertexture serves as a nexus for tracing the relationship between the material within the text to phenomena outside the confines of the text of 1 Corinthians. Cultural intertexture, therefore, allows the interpreter the opportunity to look into the text and explore some of the illuminative cultural dynamics contained and used within it. This type of intertexture emerges “in word and concept patterns and configurations; values, scripts, codes, or systems and myths” and comes into view in a text either through reference or allusion and echo (Robbins 1996b, 58). The adoption of normative cultural motifs and traditions and co-opting it into a new context is what Robbins (1996b, 58–59) terms reference and allusion.

Reference and allusion are embedded in the discourse of 1 Corinthians and serve to reassert normative gendered cultural motifs, typical of the Graeco-Roman household code tradition. This will be elaborated on in what follows in this chapter. According to Robbins (1996b, 58), “A *reference* is a word or phrase that points to a personage or tradition known to people on the basis of tradition”. An “*allusion* is a statement that presupposes a tradition that exists in textual form, but the text being interpreted is not attempting to ‘recite’ the text”.<sup>19</sup> As has been discussed in chapter three of this thesis, gender delimitations and engendering brought about by the social constraints (regulatory schemas) of that epoch necessitated what was construed as ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) and permeated all social interactions in the ancient Mediterranean.<sup>20</sup> Ideal Masculinity, therefore, was very much a gendered performance that involved mimicking the hegemonic cultural expectations and was not automatically determined by a person’s anatomical sex. In fact other personal characteristics and bodily dispositions often held greater persuasive power to demonstrate masculinity than mere anatomy alone.<sup>21</sup>

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chapter as well as chapter five reflects similarities and developments from my master of social sciences mini thesis, see Jodamus (2005, 50–61, 62–64, 70–74). In my Master’s thesis I employed SRI in a more programmatic way in comparison to my present work in this thesis. My aim in that thesis was primarily to gain proficiency and familiarity in employing SRI as a research analytic in my analysis of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 as a test case. Some of the SRI related assertions in that thesis in a very basic way overlap with this current project, but to a large extent I have progressed from that initial study and implementation of SRI, especially with my incorporation of gender-critical analysis as a key hermeneutical optic and also in my investigation of a completely different text, namely, 1 Corinthians.

<sup>19</sup> Emphasis his.

<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of this current chapter I will be focusing upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). In the next chapter I will focus upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of

In the discussion which follows I will demonstrate how certain passages within 1 Corinthians are scripted as masculine and very often construct and represent hegemonic masculinity(ies) typical of the Graeco-Roman society. Furthermore, I will argue, that the implicit gendered discourse of 1 Corinthians serves only to script bodies to mimetically perform along the lines of the dominant structurings of ideal masculinity(ies). Following a reading for gender approach,<sup>22</sup> informed by a cultural intertextual optic, I will focus my analysis upon the texts that I deem imperative to the performativity of masculinity(ies). This hermeneutical approach requires a “reading between the lines”, with the objective to delineate those conditions that manufacture “the hidden gendered script”. In this regard I will not limit my analysis on texts that only specifically mention man as a *topos* of inquiry, but instead, I will look more closely at the rhetorical performance of masculinity(ies) within the discourse of the texts.<sup>23</sup> The former serves only to reinforce androcentric and essentialistic notions of masculinity(ies) and jettisons to the periphery other more implicit structurings of masculinity(ies) that by their concealment or implicitness suggest how reiteration has catapulted these to a status of being taken for granted, a status of accepted or given realities. In fact these concealed aspects operate so much more powerfully exactly because they are concealed and simply taken for granted as “natural”, or, as Butler (1993, ix, xii) argues “constituted”.

As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) from the ancient Mediterranean was more complex and fluid and

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femininity(ies).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Gleason (1995, 58–60); Larson (2004, 86–87).

<sup>22</sup> See page 45 of this thesis.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Bird (2011, 181). Commentators such as Barrett (1968); Conzelmann (1975); Fee (1987); Collins (1999); Thiselton (2000) allude to gendered nuances in their interpretations of specific passages in 1 Corinthians, however, this is not done through the hermeneutical lenses of a gender-critical inquiry that focuses upon the rhetorical construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) within the text. Given the nature of my inquiry and the goals of this thesis, standard commentaries on 1 Corinthians do not offer much assistance and very few, if any, approach the subject of inquiry from a gender-critical vantage point seeking to understand the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies). Because of this I have limited the use of commentaries on 1 Corinthians in this chapter, as well as in chapters five and six, and I have instead opted to engage the burgeoning scholarship on gender-critical discussions that have emerged in the last decade or so in the field of New Testament studies and Pauline studies in particular. Cf. Chapter two of this thesis.

not merely limited to fixed categorisation.<sup>24</sup> Commenting on Pauline scholarship in general Mitchell (2003, 19–20) asserts,

that the meaning of Paul's letters *is not and never was* a fixed and immutable given awaiting discovery, nor was it transparent in the moment of their initial reading, but it was (and is) negotiated in the subsequent history of the relationship between Paul and those he addressed by his letters, who individually and together wrangle with the text and its possibilities of meaning.<sup>25</sup>

In what follows I will wrestle with the possible negotiated meaning and meaning effects of Paul's texts as they construct and represent masculinity(ies) within the discourse of 1 Corinthians.

## **2.1. Wisdom and Rhetorical Performance as Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians**

In 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 Paul sketches a sequence of three interconnected arguments (1:18-25; 1:26-31; 2:1-5) that critique the human value system used by the Corinthian Christians under the guise of wisdom (1:20-25). And then in 2:6-16, Paul offers them the Godly alternative, true wisdom, which, by his estimation they were not mature enough to receive (3:1-4) (Wanamaker 2003b, 125).<sup>26</sup> Winter (2002, 180) sees the problem of wisdom in terms of rhetoric linked specifically to sophistry and along this trajectory sets out to explain the emphasis by Paul on the wisdom of God versus the wisdom of the world or humankind. Winter (2002, 59–79) surveys how Philo used the term sophist and concludes that it was consistently used to refer to virtuoso orators. According to Winter (2002, 141) Paul deliberately chooses an anti-sophistic approach and shields his church-planting work in

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Hearon (2006, 616).

<sup>25</sup> Her emphasis. Also see Hearon (2006, 606) who understands 1 and 2 Corinthians from a “location represented by the intersection of multiple identities” that gives rise to a multiplicity of meanings and gendered articulations.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Thiselton (2000, 224–225); Hearon (2006, 608).

Corinth in light of an environment of sophistic “conventions, perceptions and categories”. Furthermore this analysis posits that the Corinthians constructed a sophistic idea of discipleship which made them vulnerable to problems of factionalism and dissension which was often associated with that movement (Winter 2002, 141).

Marshall (1987, 389) believes Paul’s argumentation in 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 to be in contravention of the normative rhetorical praxis of his epoch and may be seen to carry a fair measure of personal shame for Paul in light of the standard socio-cultural determinations governing rhetorical display. Both the arguments from Winter (2002, 141, 143) and Marshall (1987, 389), however, do not consider the gendered nuances implicit in the text given the dominant ancient Mediterranean gendered system(s). In fact the rhetorical system that is indicted by Paul according to Winter (2002, 155) and Marshall (1987, 389) was also a highly complex gendered system comprising gender performativity through rhetorical displays and bodily dispositions.<sup>27</sup> As Liew (2011, 133) states, “[R]hetoric is about the body of the orator as much as the body of a speech”. When Paul is engaged in persuasion through the discourse of 1 Corinthians, gender construction(s) and representation(s) is exactly what is at stake, because of the nature of the ancient Mediterranean gendered system(s) and its intersection with rhetorical argumentation and gender performativity.<sup>28</sup> It is my contention that this performative aspect, therefore, necessitates a gender-critical reading of the text.

Paul’s discourse in 2:1-5 intentionally evokes a rhetographic image of Paul’s initial preaching activity in Corinth as the readers/auditors are invited to picture the nature of his preaching performance with an implicit comparison to the well-known image of sophistic orators in Corinth. Paul’s self-portrayal points to the image of him preaching to the Corinthians as a very unimpressive, non-sophistic rhetorician with a similarly unimpressive

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<sup>27</sup> For further discussion of this see chapter three of this thesis. Cf. Winter (2002, 183, 188) for more primary text examples besides those that I highlighted in chapter three.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 219–223). Contra Wire (1990a, 137–138) who argues from the premise that Paul is engaged in the art of rhetorical persuasion. She does not, however, see the link between gender identity and rhetorical performance. The result is that her analysis focuses particularly on women and more specifically, the Corinthian women prophets and how they prophesied. She also explores how women were silenced and issues regarding head covering for women, but she does not engage Paul’s discourse to analyse how it constructs gender identity(ies) (Wire 1990a).

message and presentation in comparison to the sophistic rhetoricians who offered persuasive philosophy.<sup>29</sup> As Paul says, he did not approach them with “lofty words or wisdom” (ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας) (2:1). Instead in his proclamation of the crucified Christ and God’s testimony to them, he came in weakness (ἀσθενεία), fear (φόβῳ), and trembling (τρόμῳ) (2:3). He mentions further that his preaching was devoid of the “persuasiveness of wisdom” (πειθοῦ σοφίας) as practised by the sophists. Instead his public proclamation (κήρυγμα) was founded on “a demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως) (2:4). The reason he cites for this strategy is so that the faith of the Corinthians would be established on the basis of God’s power (ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ) instead of human wisdom (ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων) (2:5).

In 2:4 Paul asks his audience to picture how he trumped the sophists not by power of his rhetorical performance, which he admits was unimpressive, but by the demonstration of the divine spirit and divine power. Undoubtedly this invited the Corinthians to visualise what they had seen with their own eyes and heard with their own ears when Paul preached, namely, manifestations of the spirit such as are discussed in 1 Corinthians 12. In this instance Paul’s rhetography was intended to persuade the audience that in spite of his shortcomings as a rhetor he had given the Corinthians a demonstration more impressive and powerful than anything the sophists could have offered. Hence rhetography serves Paul’s rhetological or argumentative goal in 2:1-5. What is seldom noticed is that in light of the dominant ancient Mediterranean constructions of gender, Paul’s depiction of himself and his rhetoric in the way presented in 2:1-5 impinges greatly on his masculinity.

Scholars have demonstrated the importance of rhetorical performance to understanding the argumentative nature of Paul’s rhetoric and his relationship with the Corinthians (Wire 1990a, 138; Vander Stichele and Penner 2005a, 289).<sup>30</sup> As mentioned earlier, however, Paul’s rhetorical performance is also a performance of gender (Larson

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Given (2001, 95–103); Winter (2002, 141, 172–179).

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the importance of rhetoric to Biblical Criticism in general see Botha and Vorster (1996, 17–27). Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza (1996, 25–53).



2004, 87). Gleason (1990, 389–416; 1995, 82–102, 404) has demonstrated that rhetorical ability intersected with commonplace notions of virility and masculinity(ies) in the ancient setting. Any man who had his gaze set on a leadership role in the first or second century would, therefore, have subscribed to copious and seemingly perpetual surveillance of his performance of masculinity by onlookers and rivals (Larson 2004, 87).

In accordance with common public speaking protocol in the Graeco-Roman socio-cultural context honour and shame were antithetical gendered binaries with honour being the domain of masculinity(ies) and shame the domain of femininity(ies).<sup>31</sup> Adherence to proper speaking conventions and the use of eloquent oratorical performance could acquire a great deal of honour (male virtue) for a speaker.<sup>32</sup> Whereas poor oratorical performances could result in shame (female virtue) being attributed to a speaker with the concomitant denigration by one's rivals and detractors that accompanied poor rhetorical conventions. According to Winter (2002, 155–159, 183), the sophists of Roman Corinth, in particular, were noted for their arrogance and intense rivalries. Because of the propensity for bodily surveillance and scrutiny in this ancient context with a keen gaze given to the demeanour of a public speaker, the strength of his voice, and his gestures it was incumbent upon such a person to perform appropriately.<sup>33</sup> Larson (2004, 88) notes that “[b]ecause performance as a speaker was also gender performance, deficiency in presentation created an opening for a speaker's rivals to denounce him as ‘effeminate’”.<sup>34</sup> The continual performance of masculinity and the concomitant threat of failure to maintain a masculine status with an ensuing denigration into a (un)masculine or feminine state of being was a very real concern for men during this epoch (Gunderson 2000, 198).

In this gendered context any perception of bodily weakness, would necessarily imply social weakness and the loss of masculinity (Martin 1995b, 35). Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 8) argue that “[a]t stake in speaking and acting in the public forum is nothing less

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Philo (*Special. Laws.* 3.169–175).

<sup>32</sup> See Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria.* 11.2.30).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria.* 2 12.9–11).

<sup>34</sup> For further discussion and primary text examples demonstrating this assertion, see pages 72–73 of this thesis.

than the battle for creating and maintaining one's ideal male identity, often at the expense of someone".<sup>35</sup> Paul's apparent lack of rhetorical skill and weakness of speech according to his own self-claim in 1 Cor. 2:1-5 must be understood in terms of a gendered cultural context that held authority, rhetorical skill, and the construction of masculinity(ies) to be almost synonymous. To attack one was to attack the others.

What are we to make of Paul's description of his own weakness and lack of rhetorical sophistication in 1 Cor. 2:1-5 given this gendered context then? Indeed, Paul's construction of himself and his speech in the way depicted in 1 Cor. 2:1-5 is a far cry from what the normative practices of ancient rhetoric, comportment, and masculine performance dictated. Instead of rhetorical prowess, Paul offers a divine wisdom that he regards is greater than and more important than elaborate speech. In his rhetoric in 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5, Paul abandons normative notions of masculinity(ies) as traditionally expressed, through persuasive and skilful rhetoric, and calls instead for an alternative construction of masculinity(ies) in weakness (femininity). This alternative (un)masculinity is displayed for Paul through divine power and wisdom that is made manifest through weakness in the person of Jesus the crucified saviour (1 Cor. 1:18, 23; 2:2).

According to Punt (2014, 9) "Paul's insistence on a crucified Christ (1 Cor. 2:2), created a paradox in combining a Roman punishment executed on mainly politically [sic] subversives and a claim against the absolute power of Rome".<sup>36</sup> Hearon (2006, 608) asserts that "Paul's effort to redefine wisdom in terms of the 'weakness of the cross' suggests that the Corinthians, by contrast, understand wisdom in terms of spiritual power". It may well be that the social elite in the Corinthian community were responsible for this claim to wisdom as they would have the financial means to invite philosophers into their homes (Martin

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<sup>35</sup> For further discussion of the hierarchical engendering of the Graeco-Roman world in relation to public speaking protocol and in particular how this was regarded as the domain of the male in which to construct masculine identity see Vorster (2003, 84–85). Here Vorster (2003, 84–85) discusses Quintilian's (*Institutio Oratoria*. 11.3.19-29) prescriptives on gesture, voice and the body of the orator as a construction of masculinity. Also see Conway (2008, 114).

<sup>36</sup> Hellerman (2001, 98) views this as a "radical inversion of common assumptions" that provides Paul with the ammunition he needs to construct a view of reality that is in opposition to the dominant culture.

1995b, 73).<sup>37</sup> Punt (2014, 9) argues further suggesting another important aspect that will be discussed shortly when he notes, “In combination with the crucified Christ, Paul ascribed a central role to his resurrection, to a risen Christ (e.g., 1 Cor. 15), which signalled God’s intervention in current affairs towards a radical alteration of the world”.

I agree with Punt’s initial assertion of an evident paradox in this text as well as Hearon’s identification of Paul’s strategy to redefine wisdom. I differ, however, in my articulation of what the meaning of the paradox and redefinition entails and suggest that gendered nuances are also evident.<sup>38</sup> Instead of locating the meaning of this paradox along the lines of “analogies between Roman and divine empires” (Punt 2014, 9) linked to the intersection of the political domain and religious formations, or the redefinition of the wisdom tradition in light of an understanding of sophistic wisdom linked with the Hellenistic Jewish tradition. I would like to call our attention to the gendered paradox in this text (Moore 2001, 158), paying particular attention to how the crucified and resurrected body of Christ constructs and represents notions of masculinity(ies) in the text.

According to the dominant gender ideologies of the Graeco-Roman world, as was discussed in chapter three of this thesis, a penetrated body was deemed a feminine body. In the example of Jesus’ crucified body, in light of ancient ideologies of gender, his body represents one that was violated, pierced, penetrated by beatings and torture culminating in his death by crucifixion and rendering it effeminate. Cicero noting the indignity and absolute abomination of crucifixion states, “[t]o bind a Roman citizen is a crime, to flog him an abomination, to kill him is almost an act of murder, to crucify him is—what? There is no fitting word that can possibly describe so horrible a deed” (*Against Verres*. 2.5.64). The crucified body of Jesus was, therefore, an (un)masculine,<sup>39</sup> and not inviolable body.<sup>40</sup> Hearon

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. Wire (1990b, 63–67) who offers a brief explanation of the social status of the Corinthian women prophets, the Christian men in Corinth, as well as that of Paul. She posits that the women prophets have experienced a rise in social status as well as some of the men. But in comparison Paul has experienced a drop in social status although it is still higher than theirs in absolute terms. Cf. Punt (2013c, 35).

<sup>38</sup> Contra Witherington (1995, 148) who understands the main assertion of the paradox of the cross to be about God vindicating “human powerlessness” and humiliating a reliance on human power alone. Witherington (1995, 148) states further, “This is what Paul’s counter-order wisdom of the cross is all about, and it is radical enough that, if taken seriously, it will require the Corinthians to give up many of the dominant values and

(2006, 610) asserts that “the cross is a sign of ignominy (1.22): an instrument of torture reserved for slaves, traitors, and the marginalized, representing the most humiliating form of death”. The cross, however, carries with it a set of complex gendered structurings, meanings and meaning effects that are in contradistinction to the dominant notions of masculinity(ies) and this emphasis also has to be noticed.

Moore (2001, 158), in his investigation of Romans 1:18-3:31 has argued that “the Pauline Jesus’ spectacular act of submission [by death on the cross]—his consummately ‘feminine’ performance—is simultaneously and paradoxically a demonstration of his masculinity”.<sup>41</sup> Given the “broader cultural gender ideology” (Conway 2008, 71) of the ancient Mediterranean, which epitomised self-control as a main benchmark for masculinity, Moore (2001, 159–160) pictures a transformation of a dominant cultural *topos* of masculinity.<sup>42</sup> He argues that “it is hard to resist reading the Pauline Jesus’ submission unto death as a bravura display of self-mastery, and hence a spectacular performance of masculinity” (Moore 2001, 159–160). Conway (2008, 73) in her investigation of Galatians 3:1 similarly observes that “from a gender-critical perspective, when Jesus is portrayed as one who willingly dies for the good of others, his death becomes a noble, courageous, and thereby manly act”. I submit that a similar understanding may be applied to 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5, where Paul “simultaneously and paradoxically” (Moore 2001, 158) demonstrates and mimics divine hypermasculinity in his identification with Jesus.<sup>43</sup> In this instance Paul presents himself as weak (feminine),<sup>44</sup> only to claim, on the other hand, that he is actually a real man (*vir*  
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presuppositions of their culture about power and wisdom”.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Conway (2008, 70) and her notion of the “‘unmanned’ Christ”.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Gaventa (1996, 112); Glancy (2004, 99–135); Conway (2008, 67); Liew (2011, 136).

<sup>41</sup> See pages 60-61 above. Cf. Moore (2001, 163–164); Conway (2008, 71–78).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Conway (2008, 82). Conway (2008, 71–73) turns to a notion of vicarious death to undo the (un)masculinity of Jesus and redefines his death on a cross as a trait of masculinity in accordance to the broader gendered cultural logic.

<sup>43</sup> See Moore (1996, 99, 139), for the notion of hypermasculinity. Moore (1996, 139) notes that Jesus “himself is a projection of male narcissism”.

<sup>44</sup> It was a common *topos* in the sex-gender system of the ancient Mediterranean for women to be regarded as weak. According to the sex-gender logic of that epoch women were naturally seen as weak, fearful, emotional and uncontrolled (Philo, *Questions and Answers on Exodus*. 1.8). For further discussion see chapter three of this thesis. Cf. Satlow (1994, 2); Martin (1995b, 33; 2006, 44); Stegemann (1999, 361); and Økland (2004, 51).

*bonus*),<sup>45</sup> and beyond that in his imitation of and “cruciformity” (Gorman 2001, 156) with Jesus (1 Cor. 1:18; 2:2) he is in fact a hypermasculine man.<sup>46</sup>

SRI as described by Robbins (1996b, 40) is helpful here to see the social and cultural intertexture implicit in the text. What appears at first glance to be a subversion of the hegemonic construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies), is in fact a reconfiguration of normative masculinity(ies), with Jesus being the archetypal representation of virile masculinity, or even hypermasculinity for Paul and the Corinthian community to emulate.<sup>47</sup> This then seems to be a Christianising of a dominant gendered script which only serves to re-inscribe normative masculinity(ies).

Paul imbues suffering with power in his articulation of Jesus’ crucified body, a body that suffered pain and torture and effeminisation but is restored to a position of power and authority.<sup>48</sup> This representation of the crucified body of Jesus only serves to authenticate dominant notions of masculinity(ies),<sup>49</sup> and in this way Jesus’ body becomes what Butler (1993) has called a “regulatory body” or as Foucault (1977, 26) would express it, a political technology of the self that merely re-inscribes hegemonic masculinity(ies). As a “regulatory body”, Jesus’s body also functions to regulate the formation and production of the Corinthians’ bodies and to script it to perform hegemonic masculinity(ies).<sup>50</sup> As Vorster

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<sup>45</sup> For this understanding of a real man see pages 65-73 above. Cf. Cicero (*De Oratore*, 2.43.184); Quintilian (*Institutio Oratoria*, 6.2.18). According to the common stereotypes regarding Roman sex and gender ideologies as gleaned from ancient prescriptive texts the *vir bonus* (good man) was the ideal essence and representation of a dominant/active/penetrative adult male citizen (Walters 1997, 31, 32; Skinner 1997b, 14, 15, 24). For further discussion of this term see Gunderson (1998, 170, 171, 183, 185); Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 223–224; 2009, 78); and Conway (2008, 16).

<sup>46</sup> In Galatians 2:19 Paul argues that he was crucified with Christ and, therefore, assimilates this crucified identity to himself and in doing so constructs a “cruciformed” identity.

<sup>47</sup> A primary objective of intertextual analysis as posited by Robbins (1996b, 40) is the delineation of various “processes of configuration and reconfiguration of phenomena in the world outside the text”.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Vorster (2003, 66).

<sup>49</sup> See (Conway 2008, 67–88) and her discussion of masculinity in relation to Galatians 3:1. She asserts, “Paul’s own masculine status was integrally linked to his proclamation of Christ, especially with respect to the rhetoric of the cross and crucifixion” (Conway 2008, 68).

<sup>50</sup> This idea is taken from Vorster (2003, 69) in his application of Foucault (1977, 26) and Butler (1993) to his investigation of early Christian female martyr bodies. He demonstrates that “bodies that must have suffered inexpressible pain were restored to a position of power”. According to his analysis the female body that was often “equated with the soil” and a place only to house, grow and nurture “male generative power”, is empowered to perform in a masculine way in light of normative cultural articulations of gender (Vorster 2003, 68). This empowerment, however, serves to subordinate women (femininity) and in so doing merely replicates and supplements the primacy and agency of men (masculinity) which then only re-inscribes hegemonic

(2003, 69–70) argues:

The regulatory body is a site upon which political meaning is inscribed. As such it is a [sic] not only a product of political meaning, but also enforces and entrenches certain politicalities. It is a product of political power, but its ‘regulatory force is [also] made clear as a kind of productive power, the power to produce, demarcate, circulate, differentiate’. There is therefore a dynamics of political power that forms, infuses and pervades the bodies it controls. The body that it structured, serves again to structure bodies.

Lopez (2011, 90–91) calls for attention to be paid to the structuring and performativity of Paul’s body or using Glancy (2010, 12) again his “corporal vernacular”.<sup>51</sup> Lopez (2011, 90) asserts, “While there are numerous avenues into the discussion of (re)imag(in)ing Paul, one issue that is particularly worthy of our attention is the manner in which Paul’s own body is depicted in his letters”. She views Paul’s body as a “hybridized body” that is “always negotiating (and being negotiated by) and mimicking empire” (Lopez 2011, 90). This hybridised body of Paul, as sketched by Lopez, is depicted in relation to postcolonial studies aimed at investigating notions of empire and imperialism. I am interested in investigating Paul’s hybridised body, especially in relation to how it performs as constituted by power and the *habitus* of the ancient gendered setting. From this vantage point Paul has a hybridised, gendered body or a negotiated body that constructs and represents gender in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.

Paul’s assimilation of and identification with the crucified body of Christ and his message of Christ’s crucified body also carries with it gendered nuances. Lopez (2011, 90)

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masculinity(ies) as articulated and affirmed in Graeco-Roman notions of gender (Vorster 2003, 69, 80, 81). Jesus as regulatory body for the Corinthian congregation and his rhetographic image of hypermasculinity also offers a competitive possibility for emperor veneration and may even be seen as eclipsing the emperor as the epitome of male authority and masculinity. This rhetographic image of Jesus by Paul may then be regarded as a possible subversion of Roman imperialism that was punishable by death. This type of conjecture, however, goes beyond the scope and limitations of this thesis. For further discussion and interpretive possibilities see; Vorster (2003, 75–78); Ehrensperger (2004); Marchal (2008); and Punt (2011, 53–61; 2014).

<sup>51</sup> See n.44 of chapter 3 for further explication.

commenting on Galatians 2:19 critiques the “stability and impenetrability” of Paul’s masculinity. She claims that his “‘manhood’ is stable neither in legend nor in letter. Paul is vulnerable in a manner that he would not have been as a Roman citizen, a manly soldier and a persecutor imitating Roman hierarchical patterns, or a colonized ‘other’ fighting for the empire”. Paul in this regard then has a “compromised masculinity that signifies vulnerability” (Lopez 2011, 91) in his construction of masculinity given hegemonic notions of masculinity in that ancient context.

Taking her analysis further to a discussion of Galatians 4:19 Lopez (2011, 91) argues that “Paul transforms his compromised masculinity”. In a somewhat comparable way Martin’s argument of hypermasculinity may also be seen then as a transformation of Paul’s compromised or (un)masculine body in his depiction of himself in 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5. This comes about as Paul positions himself alongside Jesus’ conquering, self-controlled and regulatory body. In so doing Paul assimilates the positive characteristics of Jesus’ hypermasculine body onto and into his own body and transforms his weak (un)masculine body into a dominant masculine image. This construction and representation of masculinity, however, serves only to buttress androcentrism and solidifies hegemonic notions of masculinity(ies) that were prevalent in the gendered systems from that context.<sup>52</sup>

The rhetorical argument or rhetology used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 is based upon and exudes noticeable signs from the secular Graeco-Roman culture of the first century. These implicit signs may be seen in the shape of normative patriarchal understandings of hegemonic masculinity(ies). By his implementation of normative Graeco-Roman cultural practices and values, it seems, therefore, that Paul was totally enculturated within the dominant cultural surroundings in which he lived. As a result he adopted a commonplace cultural understanding of masculinity(ies) that linked rhetorical displays to gender performativity. At first glance it seems that his presentation of himself as weak by standard cultural rhetorical assumptions detracts from his masculinity and in fact renders him

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<sup>52</sup> Conway (2008, 82) argues, “[W]hile Paul may have been anti-empire, it does not follow that he was countercultural or that he subverted basic gender ideologies of his time”.

(un)masculine and effeminate. At a second glance, however, it turns out to be a rhetorical move in which he manages to assimilate and subsume his deficient (un)masculinity in that of Christ's regulatory body. This in effect, turns out to be a demonstration of hypermasculinity that only re-inscribes andronormativity and patriarchy from the ruling social system. As Butler (2006, 285) puts it, there is "no subverting of a norm without inhabiting that norm". Vorster (2014, 8) elaborates further when he asserts, "There is no external vantage point from which the interconnection of discourses can be inquired. The consequence may well be that the subversion of the norm develops into a reproducing or remaking of the norm".<sup>53</sup>

## **2.2. Father-Children Metaphors as Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians**

Paul not only describes himself as a "nursing mother" (1 Cor. 3:1-4) to the Corinthians, but more importantly in terms of the rhetology of 1 Corinthians he also portrays himself as an "absent father" (1 Cor. 4:14-5:13).<sup>54</sup> In 4:14, Paul emphatically calls the Corinthians his τέκνα μου ἀγαπητά, and then in 4:15b, he asserts that he begat them as their father through the gospel that he preached to them (ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα). Thus he gives himself a unique position of authority that marks him off from other leaders in the church because they were merely guardians (NRSV) (παιδαγωγούς) under his fatherly authority.

These metaphorical constructions invoke the rhetographic image of a well-to-do household for the auditors of the letter since παιδαγωγοί were normally household slaves in more prosperous households whose role was to escort the male children of the household to the school where their formal education took place. Paul's rhetography in 4:14-15 serves the

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<sup>53</sup> See chapter six for further discussion of the interconnection of power, ideology and discourse in the making of gendered normativities.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of Paul as a nursing mother see chapter five of this thesis. Gaventa (2007, 6, 8) argues that the paternal imagery used by Paul in 1 Cor. 4:15 is directly linked to Paul's preaching and evangelisation of the Corinthians. Similarly, maternal imagery is employed by Paul such as in 1 Cor. 3:1-2 when Paul's focus is on more relational aspects between himself and the Corinthians. This binary thinking, however, serves only to support a dualistic understanding of sex and gender that positions femininity as relational and caring and masculinity as procreative and empowering. In so doing it merely perpetuates the gender normativities of the ancient Mediterranean and creates replicated gendered structurings that further establishes sexist ideologies.



purpose of rhetologically asserting his absolute authority over the community he had created and its leaders. As Wanamaker (2003b, 118) argues, Paul's depiction of himself to the Corinthian congregation as their father in Christ (1 Cor. 4:14-15) carried with it the symbolic meaning of the cultural conception of what it entailed to be a father in accordance with the cultural understanding of this term in both Jewish and Graeco-Roman cultures of that time period. Burke (2003, 96) in his analysis of 1 Cor. 4:14-21 also looks to the socio-historical context in which Paul found himself in order to identify meaning for this imagery. Burke (2003, 96) observes that

when the apostle employs these terms he is drawing on the *common assumptions or normal social expectations* of household members in the ancient world. That is to say, there were in Paul's day conventional attitudes or presuppositions regarding how fathers, children (and brothers) *ought* to conduct themselves towards one another.<sup>55</sup>

In view of the role of the Roman *paterfamilias* as an archetype of powerful masculinity(ies) it is notable that Paul describes himself as the father and his congregation as children (Osiek and Balch 1997, 165; Burke 2003, 100–105, 111). Lassen (1997, 111), dealing with the father metaphor in Roman society asserts:

[t]he Romans did not view themselves as a society of mothers, daughters, and brothers but rather as a society of fathers and sons. This is particularly apparent in the political life of Rome. In this system the *paterfamilias* was placed at the top of the hierarchy within the family. Similarly the father metaphor played the most prominent role amongst family metaphors used in the aristocratic Republic and later on in imperial Rome.

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<sup>55</sup> His emphasis. For further discussion of some of the meanings implied by the father-child relationship as it relates to hierarchy, authority, imitation, affection, and education see Burke (2003, 100–105). Cf. Komaravalli (2007, 174–183) for further discussion and for a list of primary text examples.

The father metaphor was a natural metaphor for describing governance since it was based on the primary experience of every human being who grows up in a household headed by a father or father figure. Roman imperial ideology portrayed the emperor as the father of the nation (Dio *Orationes* 43.17.2; Cicero, *The Republic* 1. 64). Vorster (2003, 71) notes, “In a hierarchy of bodies, the emperor was on the other end of the scale [to slaves]; here was not only male, but *the male*” and his masculinity and virility took the central place within the imperial cult. According to Fischler (1988, 167, 169, 179) the emperor was the archetypal patriarchal representation, the masculine authority par excellence, endowed with all the characteristics of virile masculinity which included military dominance, benevolence, and being the supreme benefactor. Vorster (2003, 72) further remarks, “The person of the emperor embodied all the powerful virile characteristics that could function as the generative principle for the making of appropriate, ‘wanted’ bodies in the Roman Empire”.

The basic family unit of ancient Graeco-Roman society was the household headed by the *κύριος* (the head of the traditional Greek household) or the *paterfamilias* (the head of the traditional Roman household) at the apex of their respective households with autocratic control.<sup>56</sup> Then followed the wife and matron of the household who was regarded as subordinate. After her and in an analogous manner followed the children and slaves (Verner 1983, 30, 33; Davies 1996, 27). Male status, which was the prerogative of the citizen and the *κύριος* was regarded as a function of age as well as of sex, dependent upon self-control, but also control over women, children and slaves (*Memorabilia*. 4.5.2–4; *Symposium*. 183b–184b; Philo *Special Laws*. 3.169–175).

According to Aristotle (*Politics* 1253b 1-14), the household comprised various smaller departments made up of “slaves and freemen” with the primary structure of the household being made up of “master and slave, husband and wife, father and children”. Komaravalli (2007, 173) comments that Roman imperial ideology viewed the empire

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Hellerman (2001, 29–30); D’Angelo (2007, 68–70).

metaphorically as a household, and specifically, the household of the emperor. The emperor then, “as the *pater patriae*, the ‘father of the country’, was thereby implicitly associated to the household metaphor” (Komaravalli 2007, 173). Aristotle (*Politics* 1259a.20-24) mentions further that “the science of household management has three divisions”, that of master to slave, paternal relationships, and conjugal relationships. He then elaborates on this hierarchical structure and states that “it is a part of the household science to rule over wife and children (over both as over freemen, yet not with the same mode of government, but over the wife to exercise republican government and over the children monarchical)” (*Politics* 1259a.20-24).

Not only was the household structure hierarchical and patriarchal, but in an almost autocratic display of power and sovereignty it positioned the ruling of the father over his children to be paradigmatic to that of a king governing his empire in the virtues of affection and authority (Aristotle, *Politics* 1259b.1-19). Children were deemed not even to be in possession of their own virtue and instead their virtue was tied to the father figure who resided over them. Similarly and based on the hierarchical household system the virtue of slaves were directly linked to that of the master and slaves were deemed to possess deficient but smaller quantities of virtue based on their low standing in the household system (Aristotle, *Politics* 1260a.20-24). A father’s hierarchical authority and control went beyond the control of merely his immediate children and even extended to that of his son’s children (Dixon 1992, 117–118).

In his analysis, Wanamaker (2003b, 118) makes clear that “Paul’s application of the father-children metaphor in his relation with the Corinthians has ideological significance in terms of his claim to the right to exercise power over them and to challenge the claims of competitors to power”.<sup>57</sup> Martin (1990, 122) notes that this assertion by Paul takes hold of a self-depiction that cements his status as authoritative: he is not simply a *παιδαγωγός* (which others are), but their *πατήρ* (4:15).<sup>58</sup> This is tantamount to a direct claim to authority and

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<sup>57</sup> This aspect of ideology and power will be dealt with more fully in chapter six. For now it is worthwhile just to call attention to its presence here.

status over the Corinthian congregation and also over other rival leaders. More importantly, however, from the vantage point of this thesis, this is a direct claim to a dominant construction and representation of masculinity(ies) by Paul. Wanamaker (2003b, 118, 135–136) and Burke (2003, 95–113), however useful, in their discussions of the father metaphor do not investigate the notion of father-child relationships through the eyes of a gender-critical approach. Their investigations, therefore, does not deal specifically with how the father metaphor and the relationships it connotes is simultaneously a gendered metaphor with gendered implications that constructs gender in the text in a particularly masculine manner.

In his investigation of 1 Cor. 4:14-21 Komoravalli (2007, 185) concludes the following:

Source Domain	Target Domain
Father-children relationship in antiquity	Paul-Corinthian Christians relationship in Corinth
A father procreated his children.	Paul converted the Corinthian Christians to faith in Jesus Christ, thereby founding the church in Corinth.
A father was responsible for educating and socialising his children pertaining to the core knowledge and values of his society and culture.	Paul proclaimed the life orienting Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Corinthian Christians, after which he socialised them in the Christian way of living.
A father functioned with hierarchical power, having sole custody and control over his own children, his sons' children and all family property.	Paul claimed hierarchical power over the Corinthian Christians as his converts.
A father possessed authority over his children to discipline and punish them for their faults and misdeeds.	Paul maintained that he had the required authority over the Corinthian Christians whereby he could discipline them and correct various errors.
A father expected a willing response in obedience from his children.	Paul sought an obedient response from his converts.
A father bonded with his children.	Paul bonded with the Corinthians and regarded them with affection.

<sup>58</sup> For further discussion of this see chapter six.

Komoravalli (2007, 185–186) in his analysis of 1 Cor. 4:14-21 uses SRI together with blending theory as posited by Fauconnier & Turner (2003) to analyse the complex father metaphor. His analysis proves useful to illustrate the social and cultural connectedness of Paul's discourse to that of the household system of antiquity. In this way Paul's authority and authenticity as the Corinthian congregation's father is firmly rooted in the dynamics of the hierarchical household so that Paul, the father of the errant and factional Corinthians, has the power and authority to discipline and correct them as would a father in antiquity.

Komoravalli (2007, 186–198) does not, however, note the gendered significance of this complex father metaphor. His interpretation, therefore, is limited to only demonstrating the interconnectedness of Paul's alleged power and authority over the Corinthian congregation because of Paul's implementation of the father metaphor. He misses an important underlying point to Paul's argumentation, however, and that is that the father metaphor in and of itself is gendered and so all the characterisations of what a father figure was like in that context carries with it gendered nuances from the dominant stereotypes of masculinity(ies) from that epoch. This observation from a gender-critical perspective is highly important as this is the key to unlocking the significance of Paul's articulation and association of himself with this important metaphor. In his implementation of the father-children metaphor, Paul's discourse creates discursive gendered structurings that mimic the performativity of hegemonic masculinity(ies) as practised and re-iterated by the hegemonic gendered system (s) of that time.

Paul's discursive argument in 1 Cor. 4:14-21, therefore, serves also to re-inscribe the dominant articulations of masculinity(ies). In fact the power of this metaphor rests on the premise that masculinity(ies) must out of necessity reflect dominance and superiority as we identified in chapter three above. Paul's implementation of this metaphor serves inadvertently as a call for the re-enactment of hegemonic masculinity(ies) and in so doing upholds the normative gendered hierarchy from the secular society as a standard for the Corinthian community. This kind of adoption of normative cultural motifs and traditions and co-opting it into a new context is of course what Robbins (1996b, 58–59) terms reference and

allusion. Both aspects are embedded in the discourse of 1 Cor. 4:14-21 and serve to reassert normative cultural motifs, typical of the sex/gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean and the Graeco-Roman household code tradition.

From the discussion thus far we have discovered that Paul adopts a normative Graeco-Roman socio-cultural motif, namely, that of the priority and significance of the father figure, and transposes this cultural motif into a Christian context. It becomes evident, then, that 1 Corinthians makes use of everyday parental imagery that galvanises the heterosexual, patriarchal and androcentric gendered normativities that were rife in that ancient context.<sup>59</sup> In order to achieve his rhetorical purpose Paul employed ideal notions of what it meant to be a father, and in chapter five we will see Paul making reference to mother-infant imagery, which will demonstrate further Paul's reliance upon stereotypical gendered imagery in his discourse. The manner in which he employs this imagery, however, serves only to re-enforce ideal gendered structurings and machinations that had been concretised in *habitus* from the dominant gender system(s) of that context and re-inscribes normative and normalising notions of ideal masculinity(ies) and stereotypical masculine roles.

### **2.3. Sexual Congress and the Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians**

In what follows in this sub-section I want to explore how Paul's views on marital coitus in 1 Cor. 7:1-5 reflects an implicit gendered argument that plays a role in constructing and representing masculinity(ies) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. Wanamaker (2005a, 839–849), in his investigation of 1 Cor. 7:1-5 has demonstrated the complexity of the text's argumentative structure.<sup>60</sup> In his discussion he has argued that the rule regarding marital coitus in this chapter is that the Corinthian auditors are firstly, not to deprive one

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<sup>59</sup> In the next chapter this emphasis on parental imagery in 1 Corinthians will become more clear when we investigate mother-infant imagery.

<sup>60</sup> Also see Deming (2004, 1–6) for a helpful review of scholarly discussions on 1 Corinthians 7. Deming (2004, 43–44) argues that Paul's assertions on marriage and celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7 is best comprehended within the frameworks of Stoic and Cynic discourses and the Stoic-Cynic debate about the advantages and disadvantages of marriage.

another (v. 5a). But, secondly, contrary to the rule, partners may deprive one another sexually if two conditions are met: (1) abstinence must be mutually agreed and (2) it must be for a limited (though unspecified by Paul) period of time (v. 5b). The rationale for this exception was to facilitate personal congress with God (v. 5c). Implicit in this rationale is that this congress with God is facilitated in some way by sexual abstinence, either for reasons of purity or for reasons of religious devotion and commitment. But once the period is completed, the marriage partners must come together again in the marriage bed. The phrase καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἦτε suggests that the partners will be physically separated from one another during the period of prayer, and this leads Paul to the rationale for their coming together again, namely, in order to prevent Satan from tempting them during their period of agreed abstinence through their lack of sexual self-control (v.5d) (Wanamaker 2005a).

In 1 Cor. 7:7 Paul wants people to be like him, imitate him, with regard to not having a spouse. He describes his own version of maleness as a gift from God. Then in 7:25-28 Paul emphasises the value of remaining single both for those who have never been married (7:25-28) and for those who have been widowed (7:38-40). These texts, given the gender logic of the ancient Mediterranean world, would certainly have raised a few perplexed eye brows to say the least. First, the egalitarian two part rule inferred from Wanamaker's analysis of the text above seems perplexing if one considers the normative Graeco-Roman gender system(s). As Vorster (2003, 93–94) asserts, “There is no way that we can speak of an equality of sexes in the first few centuries of early Christianity; to do that would be to deny the continued suffering of females and again render them powerless”.<sup>61</sup> According to this “hyperheteronormative” (Moore 2001, 170) system,<sup>62</sup> sex was a mechanism that produced

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. Moore and Anderson (1998, 249–273); Braun (2002, 108, 110, 112, 115, 116). As MacDonald (1988, 285) asserts in most cases in the ancient world where women were seemingly on an egalitarian standing with men it amounted merely to “reconstituted masculinity: the female must become male”. Also see Vorster (2003, 66–94) and his articulation of early Christian martyr stories. In his analysis, a narrative that at first glance seems to empower women serves in actuality only to re-inscribe masculine hegemony and subordinate women thereby replicating and supplementing the primacy and agency of men (Vorster 2003, 69, 80, 81).

<sup>62</sup> For the notion of hyperheteronormativity, see Moore (2001, 170) where he assert that because Graeco-Roman discourses on sex comprise a “sex-gender system in which every sexual act must involve a masculine and a feminine partner—to the extent that when an anatomically female partner is lacking, an anatomically male partner must be conscripted to play the woman. Within the terms of this system, therefore, sex can only ever be

and maintained gender hierarchy and did not have much regard for the wishes of the penetrated (Moore 2001, 171). The active/male and passive/female antithesis is one that was common in the dominant gendered logic as we noted in chapter three.

Foucault (1985; 1986) picks up on this sexual dichotomy or binarism and has written a great deal about it. Brooten (1996, 245) has mentioned that “the Greek term for ‘intercourse,’ *chrēsis*, literally means ‘use’”. In this regard the “Greek authors from the classical period through late antiquity use both the noun *chrēsis* and the verb *chraomai* (‘to use’) in a sexual sense. A man ‘uses’ or ‘makes use of’ a woman or a boy” (Brooten 1996, 245). Moore (2001, 166) mentions further that a man uses women for “sexual pleasure, sexual release. But he also uses them to display his social status” which was aimed at demonstrating “his ‘superiority’ in relation to their ‘inferiority’” (Moore 2001, 166).<sup>63</sup>

Sex in Graeco-Roman society, as has been demonstrated in chapter three, was hierarchical and polarising, and sexual acts were in most cases defined along the lines of the superiority of the penetrator to the penetrated (Satlow 1994, 2; Martin 2006, 58).<sup>64</sup> The sexual penetration of the body of one person by the body (and, specifically, by the phallus) of another was not regarded as an egalitarian process of reciprocity, but as an act of power and domination performed by one superior person upon another inferior person (Walters 1997, 31; Skinner 1997b, 14). Sex, therefore, was hierarchical, polarising and phallocentric.<sup>65</sup> The insertive partner was construed as a sexual agent, whose phallic penetration of another person’s body expressed sexual activity and domination, whereas the receptive partner was construed as a sexual object, whose submission to phallic penetration displayed sexual passivity and inferiority. Sexual activity, was linked to social status and superiority and sexual passivity was linked to inferior social status. In tandem with the hegemonic notions of sex and gender penetration/ activity/dominance, was regarded as typical

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heterosex”. And due to this fact, Graeco-Roman discourses on sex thus enshrines “hyperheteronormativity” (Moore 2001, 170).

<sup>63</sup> Also see Winkler (1990b, 39). Winkler (1990b, 39) mentions in relation to the attitudes and assumptions of the Graeco-Roman world that what is significant in sexual activity are “(i) men, (ii) penises that penetrate, and (iii) the articulation thereby of relative statuses through relations of dominance”.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Foucault (1985, 53, 92–93, 114, 136, 187).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Moore (2001, 142–146).



of ideal masculinity(ies) whereas, being-penetrated/passivity/submission was typified as ideal femininity(ies) (Halperin 1990, 266–267; Walters 1997, 30; Martin 2006, 58).<sup>66</sup>

According to normative and normalising standards of sex and gendered relations from the ancient world then, sex was not about mutual consideration and reciprocity, but rather, sex was all about the penis and the dominance and social hierarchy it implied.<sup>67</sup> Artemidoros’s dream book, reflects the commonly held sexual attitudes and assumptions of the ancient Mediterranean, and serves to illustrate the dominance of the penis in social thought:

The penis is like a man’s parents since it contains the generative code [*spermatikos logos*], but it is also like his children since it is their cause. It is like his wife and girlfriend since it is useful for sex. It is like his brothers and all blood relations since the meaning of the entire household depends on the penis. It signifies strength and the body’s manhood, since it actually causes these: for this reason some people call it their “manhood” [*andreia*]. It resembles reason and education since, like reason [*logos*], it is the most generative thing of all. . . It is like the respect of being held in honor, since it is called “reverence” and “respect” (quoted from Winkler 1990b, 42)

The egalitarian notion implied in 1 Cor. 7:1-5, given what has just been discussed , would seem rather astonishing for the normative “male engendered patriarchalism” (Vorster 2003, 87) of the ancient Mediterranean and would serve to problematise normative household responsibilities.<sup>68</sup> As Vorster (2003, 72) argues the “disregard of household structure would not only be the threat to social order, but also an insult to the stability enforced by the supreme *paterfamilias*”. Similarly out of tune is Paul’s assertion in 7:25-40 where he claims

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Parker (1997, 53).

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Moore (2001, 144). Highlighting the importance of the penis to the ancient Mediterranean sex system, Moore (2001, 165, 170) has coined the terms “phallobsessive” and “phallofixated” to emphasise this fixation with the penis and the act of penetration.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Vorster (2003, 87) and his discussion of early Christian female martyrs and how their rejection of normative marital relations (marriage, childbearing and rearing) was regarded as a “problematization of ancient social household obligations”.

that it is better to remain single given the apocalyptic climate that he envisages. In light of the ancient sex and gender system(s) and the gendered logic of the dominant Graeco-Roman and Jewish moral philosophy this is a highly unusual perspective. In fact within Graeco-Roman and Jewish contexts the assumption was “that people would marry and produce children and remarry fairly quickly after being widowed or divorced” (Crocker 2004, 150). Toward the end of the Republic and the beginning of the Empire, the Roman emperor Augustus even promulgated special laws to encourage citizens to marry (Pomeroy 1975, 166; Winter 2003, 53; May 2004, 181). Paul’s instruction to remain single in light of these cultural standards and prescriptive laws does seem somewhat problematic and ambiguous by normative ancient Mediterranean standards. The possibility to interpret the encouragement to stay single as a growing development towards a radicalisation of masculinity(ies), also seems tenable. In this manner the call to stay single could be viewed as a type of heightened, pseudo-ascetic masculinisation that aspires to perfected self-control. If this interpretive possibility is accepted then hegemonic notions of masculinity(ies) is once again re-inscribed and perpetuated and this trajectory opens up the pathway to interpret Paul’s instructions to remain single as a performance of hypermasculinity.

Furthermore, given the hegemonic ancient Mediterranean gender system(s), marriage was regarded as the “public marker that the male citizen has adopted his civic responsibilities as husband, father and citizen, for by it he establishes a household” (May 2004, 181).<sup>69</sup> That Paul has such a negative view on marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 implies or creates a negative notion of masculinity(ies) or rather a negative or deficient masculinity or (un)masculinity in this text. Given the dominant gendered normativities and social obligations of the ancient Mediterranean the unmarried (or single male) man would not be regarded as fully masculine as according to the dominant performances of masculinity(ies) he had not fulfilled the duties of a truly masculine man which included fulfilling the roles of

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<sup>69</sup> Cf. Hellerman (2001, 31).

being a husband, citizen and *paterfamilias*.<sup>70</sup>

Given the gendered norms of the time, Paul's masculine status would definitely be in jeopardy as he was unmarried, and had no record of any known biological children. Could his adoption of the Corinthian congregation be seen as an attempt to rectify his *deficient* masculinity?<sup>71</sup> Does Paul's description of an egalitarian sexual lifestyle, where the husband and the wife are mutually responsible for one another, are not to deprive one another unless the abstinence is mutually agreed upon, and this for a limited period of time (v. 5b), to facilitate personal congress with God (v. 5c), constitute a rejection of certain traditional standards of masculinity(ies)? Given the hegemonic gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean, it seems that some of Paul's assertions in 1 Corinthians already create a somewhat complex and even ambivalent picture of masculinity(ies).<sup>72</sup>

That Paul's masculinity was sometimes regarded as ambivalent may be seen in the second century Acts of Paul and Thecla. In commenting on the Acts of Paul and Thecla Burrus (2005, 64) notes that Paul's masculinity(ies) was a "markedly ambivalent" masculinity(ies). Similarly, and in light of the same text, Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 143) assert that "Paul, a notable apostolic figure, has a contested masculinity in the text". Burrus (2005, 64) suggests that Paul "has become a pseudo-man" and seemingly "a mimic-woman". Could a similar assertion be made of Paul in 1 Corinthians in light of certain texts in which his masculinity(ies) is constructed and performed in a manner that would be construed as effeminate in lieu of the dominant articulations of gender and sexuality from the ancient world in which he lived? According to Burrus (2005, 64) and her investigation of Thecla, she argues that "the hybridity of Thecla's chastity story disrupts dominant cultural paradigms, unmasking men and making men out of women".

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<sup>70</sup> See Gordon (1997, 70–71) for a discussion of the *paterfamilias* and the implications that this status had on the construction of masculinity(ies).

<sup>71</sup> Moore (2001, 146) mentions in relation to Paul's celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7-8; 9:15, 15) that "he did not use his penis to affirm his social status".

<sup>72</sup> Other scholars have also noted the complexities of masculinity(ies) in their investigations of certain New Testament texts, e.g., DeBaufre and Nasrallah (2011, 166). See Thurman (2007, 185–230) and his investigation of ambivalent masculinity(ies) in Mark's gospel. Also see Conway (2008, 124) and her articulation of the complexity and "multifaceted picture" regarding masculine ideology and the Matthean Jesus. Furthermore see Conway (2008, 175–184) and her discussion of "multiple masculinities of Jesus".

But just how much disruption actually takes place when the gendered bodies are held up against the dominant ideals of masculinity(ies) from the hierarchical gendered models of antiquity such as the one-sex model? When the dominant gender models are held as the standard for engendering, normative notions of masculinity(ies) are merely re-enforced, as women simply slide up the gendered hierarchy and become more masculine. Conway (2008, 123) notes that rejection of normative social strictures is actually a type of asceticism, “and ascetic practice was in itself a means toward ideal masculinity” and may even be classified as a form of hypermasculinity. In this way Paul’s ascetic tendencies could even be regarded as a performance of hypermasculinity, leading yet again to the re-inscription of androcentric and patriarchal gendered structurings as typified in the broader cultural gender setting. Asceticism was, however, not the dominant gendered ideology, and so this interpretation could be seen to carry less weight in light of the hegemonic gendered constructions and representations of the ancient world.

From the investigation in this chapter so far 1 Corinthians seems to be more firmly rooted in the dominant cultural gendered paradigms of the ancient Mediterranean and in so doing conforms to and re-inscribes those hegemonic cultural paradigms. There are however, instances, like the one delineated in the above mentioned discussion on 1 Cor. 7:1-5 that does not fit with the ideal profile and cultural stereotypes of normative masculinity(ies) and renders the engendering situation nuanced and open for further gendered articulations and analysis.<sup>73</sup> In fact the construction(s) of masculinity(ies) that it seems to reflect is more in keeping with the “unman”, the *mollis* or κίμαιδος (Foucault 1985, 215–225; Winkler 1990b, 45–70; Moore 2001, 136–143).<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Conway (2008, 7) argues that the New Testament consists of a range of complexities to the notion of masculinity(ies). Cf. Marchal (2014, 93–113). Also see Glancy (2010, 25–47) and her investigation of 2 Corinthians 11:23–25.

<sup>74</sup> For further discussion of the κίμαιδος see Gleason (1990, 394, 411); Laqueur (1990, 53); Richlin (1993, 523–573); Corbeill (1997, 99–128); Parker (1997, 47–65); Skinner (1997b, 17, 21, 135, 136); Larson (2004, 93); May (2004, 38). Cf. Swancutt (2007, 11–62).

## 2.4. Imitation as Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Masculinity(ies) in 1 Corinthians

Having already set himself up as the Corinthian congregation's father through his use of metaphors in 4:14-21, with his concomitant power and authority derived from the hierarchical Graeco-Roman household system, Paul also directs the community to imitate him in 1 Cor. 4:16. Mitchell (1991, 49) has demonstrated that the most extensive deliberative analogy used throughout 1 Corinthians is Paul's use of himself (his own bodily *hexis*/bodiliness) as the paradigm of acceptable behaviour. While the role of imitation which Paul uses in 1 Corinthians has been the subject of a great deal of scholarly discussion (Castelli 1991a, 13, 16, 21; Fiore 2003, 228–257),<sup>75</sup> not much attention has been paid to how this imitation is also gendered and constructs gender in the text in a particular way.<sup>76</sup>

Time and time again, Paul, in his deliberative argument which calls for unity by Corinthian Christians, employs himself as the archetypal representation of the non-divisive course of action which he wishes they will imitate. As Mitchell (1991, 53–54) and Marchal (2009, 105) argue, Paul's use of himself as *the* example to imitate is not restricted to the two verses (4:16; 11:1) in the text where he urges the Corinthians to imitate him.<sup>77</sup> Those two

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<sup>75</sup> See Marchal (2008, 70,87) for a critique of the notion of mimesis as constructed by Castelli (1991a). Cf. Wire (1990b, 35–36); Mitchell (1991, 49–60); Witherington (1995, 145); Moore (1996, 30); Robbins (1996a, 196, 198); Kloppenborg (1996, 256); Økland (2004, 208); Wanamaker (2006, 346–348); Liew (2011, 138).

<sup>76</sup> Moore (2001, 164) alludes to the gendered nature of Paul's call for self-imitation. For a postcolonial understanding of mimesis see Lopez (2011, 91). Also see Marchal (2009, 101–128) for an investigation that links imitation rhetorics at the intersections of , gender, ethnicity, and empire in 1 Corinthians. According to Marchal (2009, 125) the rhetorics of imitation in 1 Corinthians “enact a form of coercive mimeticism that weaves gender and sexuality into ethnicity and empire”. Cf. Marchal (2014, 93–113) who argues for a three phased hierarchical imitation system in 1 Corinthians that is powered by citation that spans from tradition and nature, and seeks to effect a hierarchical distinction of gender that includes a regulatory schema comprised intersectionally of various discursive practices, including ethnicity, economics and imperial influences.

<sup>77</sup> My emphasis. Contra Castelli (1991a, 90, 97–115) who limits her investigation of imitation rhetorics in 1 Corinthians to only 4:16 and 11:1. A more extensive discussion of imitation will ensue in chapter six of this thesis, especially locating it as an important ideological mechanism for asserting and maintaining power by Paul. In this chapter I merely want to introduce the discussion from a gender-critical vantage point, and so I have not spent a large amount of time in discussing the work of others like I do in chapter six. Another reason for this is because in the later part of this sub section I want to spend some time focussing on imitation rhetorics as it relates to the entire Letter of 1 Corinthians using SRI's social and cultural texture as an analytical tool.

statements, however, must be seen within the wider context of the entire text in which Paul's constant appeal for imitation is also the unifying rhetorical strategy of the letter (Mitchell 1991, 54).<sup>78</sup> "Enumerating and describing Paul's self-references in 1 Corinthians, therefore, almost amounts to a summary of the contents of the letter" (Mitchell 1991, 54).

The main aim of Mitchell (1991, 60) in highlighting this feature of the text is directed to proving that the rhetorical species of the argument in this letter is deliberative. My focus, however, is on the gendered nature of this deliberative appeal. From a gender-critical perspective the appeal for imitation is also,<sup>79</sup> and perhaps more significantly, an appeal for imitation of masculinity(ies).<sup>80</sup> Moore (2001, 164) picks up on this gendered rhetoric and takes the implications even further. In light of 1 Cor. 11:1 he concludes that what was true of Paul was also true of Christ and vice versa as "Paul modeled himself on the Jesus whom he had modeled". Paul, therefore, "becomes a man whose identity inheres in his utter submission to another man. As such, he becomes a 'man,' or (wo)man, or an unman" (Moore 2001, 165).<sup>81</sup>

Given this scenario, it would appear at first glance that Paul's call for imitation in 4:16 and 11:1, which are implicitly calls for gender performance, but in fact they turn out to be a call for the imitation of (un)masculinity. Commenting on Galatians 4:12-14 and Paul's representation of himself as "an apostolic mother", Kahl (2000, 45), argues for the usurpation of established views on masculinity by Paul. She avers, "Paul's apparently 'authoritarian' demand to become like him turns out to mean the imitation of 'unmanly' weakness, which reflects the ultimate weakness of the cross and undermines all the dominance-oriented norms of the honor and shame code both on the individual/social and on a cosmological level" (Kahl 2000, 46). According to Kahl (2000, 46) this serves as a systematic subversion of patriarchy,

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<sup>78</sup> Marchal (2008, 65) in his analysis also highlights imitation rhetorics even where certain terms are not explicitly implemented.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Vander Stichele and Penner (2005a, 289).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Moore (2001, 162), where he asserts that Romans 6:16-23 is simultaneously a discourse on masculinity(ies).

<sup>81</sup> Also see Skinner (1997b, 18), who notes, "[A]ny asymmetrical relation between two Roman men is conceivably also a sexual relation". Cf. Skinner (1997a, 120).

hierarchy and gender polarity by Paul and leaves room for other gendered articulations. I do not fully agree with this type of emancipatory trajectory of Paul which positions Paul as some sort of gender liberation struggle hero that does not fit his immediate context. To do so would be too dislodge Paul from his own context, conditioned by *habitus* and gendered regulatory schemas that necessitated certain replicated gendered behaviour in light of his epoch. It does seem to me that gender construction(s) and representation(s) are indeed implicit in Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians, given the dominant notions of gender from the ancient Mediterranean. To suggest that Paul intentionally structured his rhetoric in such a way so as to strategically dismantle the bulwarks of androcentrism, patriarchy and phallocentrism that was rife in Paul's time, seems to me to be a few hermeneutical steps too many and only serves to re-inscribe Paul's authority and pre-eminence.

If we accept that the Pauline Jesus' act of submission by death on the cross was in fact a display of hypermasculinity as Moore (2001, 159–160) suggests, then the imitation called for and presented is indeed a call and presentation of hypermasculinity and andronormativity. The hypermasculinity and andronormativity reflect the normative construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) from the dominant gendered system(s), however, and serves only to enshrine its dominance. The argument so constructed emulates hegemonic masculinity(ies) as the symbolic capital since the regulatory body to be imitated reflects the ideal masculine body as exemplified from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. A further aspect of 4:16's imitation is that it is in the context of the household where children are to imitate the *paterfamilias*/lord of the household if they are to be good sons. This shows that the imitation called for is in the context of masculine representation of maleness in relationship to fatherhood. Furthermore, 4:16 links back to the discussion of 4:14-15 as that claim to fatherhood is the context of the imitation instruction and is, therefore, important for understanding imitation.

Also, when Paul delivers his arguments for imitation in the text he has in view the entire Corinthian congregation, which included women. It appears, therefore, that the women in the Corinthian community also were called on to adopt this hypermasculinity.<sup>82</sup> Marchal

(2008, 85), in relation to Philippians, notes that “when Paul delivers these arguments for imitation and the development of a particular kind of ‘us,’ he does so to women in the community, both named and unnamed”.<sup>83</sup> Moore (2001, 162) in his analysis of Romans 6:16-23 concludes that the masculinity(ies) exemplified in the text is one that all human beings can aspire too, “whether or not they have been blessed with male genitalia”.<sup>84</sup> This conjecture is not far off, if we take into consideration (1) the one-sex gender model as discussed in chapter three, (2) a hierarchical gendered topology in which women are understood to be inverted males, and (3) the possibility that women could slide up or down the hierarchical spectrum contingent on how much heat their bodies maintained. The defining factor in what has been articulated above is that the standard of the human body and its ideal representation was the male body (Laqueur 1990).

On a larger scale and in light of the overall discourse of 1 Corinthians imitation rhetoric also plays a role and has implications for the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). I will attempt to demonstrate this aspect using social and cultural texture as developed by Robbins (1996a; 1996b). Social and cultural texture functions as a useful investigative tool to examine the social systems embodied in a text.<sup>85</sup> According to Robbins (1996b, 72) one of the main goals of examining the social and cultural texture of a text is the description of the type of social and cultural person(s) that exists within the discourse or within the “world” of a particular text. Examination of the social and cultural texture also allows an interpreter to examine “the social and cultural ‘location’ of the language and the

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<sup>82</sup> See chapter six of this thesis for further discussion regarding the call for women to imitate masculinity(ies) as exemplified by Paul in his call for imitation. Cf. Burrus (2005, 62) and her assertion of “cross-gendered mimesis”. The imitation rhetorics of 1 Corinthians, from this vantage point could also possibly be seen as cross-gendered mimesis where the Corinthian women are the gender boundary crossers. In this regard also see Marchal (2014, 93–113) and his articulation of “female masculinity” in 1 Corinthians as performed by the Corinthian women as an alternative masculinity(ies). This article is one of Marchal’s more recent contributions and only became available after this chapter was compiled and so I have not been able to incorporate it, in a more detailed manner, into my discussions in this chapter.

<sup>83</sup> For further discussions of this nature see chapter five of this thesis. For now this merely deserves mentioning.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Moore and Anderson (1998, 267–269).

<sup>85</sup> Parts of what follows here in my analysis of social and cultural texture is derived from some of my findings in chapter five of my master’s of social sciences thesis and reflects modifications and further developments. See Jodamus (2005, 62–74).



type of social and cultural world the language evokes or creates” within a text (Robbins 1996b, 72).

The final stage in my analysis of the social and cultural texture of 1 Corinthians will be to examine the kind(s) of social and cultural position(s) and orientation(s) this text motivates its readers to adopt (Robbins 1996a, 144; Robbins 1996b, 72). As delineated by Robbins (1996b, 71–72) the social and cultural texture of a text comprises three interrelated main sections, namely, specific social topics, common social and cultural topics, and final cultural categories. For my discussion of the social and cultural texture of 1 Corinthians I will be focussing only upon the last one of the three above cited main sections as it most effectively demonstrates my point in this section of the thesis. It should be kept in mind that instead of these categories operating in complete isolation from one another, that in reality they in fact are interrelated concepts and thus cannot be separated from each other or analysed in an interpretive vacuum that is devoid of intersectionality.

It has already been argued that 1 Corinthians subscribes to the hegemonic cultural articulations and regulatory schemas in its construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). It seems then, in light of the patriarchal social and cultural environment that the text of 1 Corinthians tendentiously seeks to replicate the dominant structurings of masculine performance (i.e., father, *paterfamilias*, active sexual agent). A common aspect of investigation into the cultural location and orientation of a particular text also discloses to the interpreter what type of culture the discourse cultivates (Robbins 1996b, 71–72). It appears, therefore, that Paul was thoroughly inculturated in the ancient Mediterranean gendered system(s) and its hierarchies and stereotypical gendered structurings. As a result of this he, therefore, almost certainly accepted the basic androcentric cultural values and knowledge protocols of the wider society and in his articulations of masculinity(ies) mostly replicated the dominant cultural script.

Cultural location, in comparison to social location, deals with the manner in which people depict “their propositions, reasons, and arguments both to themselves and to other people. These topics separate people in terms of dominant culture, subculture, counterculture, contraculture, and liminal culture” (Robbins 1996a, 86). In my discussion of

final cultural categories I will only employ two of the above topics, namely, dominant culture and subculture.<sup>86</sup> What these final cultural topics brings to the discussion of this chapter is that it enables me to appropriately classify the evident relationship of normative ancient Mediterranean gendered aspects found within the discourse of 1 Corinthians to that of its source, namely, the dominant patriarchal and androcentric Graeco-Roman culture.

According to Robbins (1996b, 86), dominant culture rhetoric reveals a system of perceptions, standards, dispositions, and normative customs that the text either assumes or claims are confirmed by societal structures with authority to enforce them on people in an extensively large territorial area. It is obvious by now that the dominant culture within 1 Corinthians is that of Graeco-Roman culture with its traditions and cultural values. Conversely, subculture rhetoric mimics the perceptions, standards, dispositions, and normative customs of dominant culture rhetoric (Robbins 1996b, 86). It does this by finding “ways of affirming the national culture and the fundamental value orientation of the dominant society” (Robbins 1996a, 169, quoting Roberts 1978, 112–113).

The reason that the discourse of 1 Corinthians appears to be comprised chiefly of subculture rhetoric, is the text’s adoption of normative gendered cultural configurations and articulations from the dominant gendered systems (mainly the one-sex gendered model) from the leading Graeco-Roman culture and its transposition of these gendered aspects into the Christian community at Corinth with some amendment’s to that of the hegemonic cultures.<sup>87</sup> Thus the relation of the discourse contained in 1 Corinthians comprises a relationship consisting of dominant cultural rhetoric and subcultural rhetoric whereby the text seems to have a strong subcultural relation to that of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture and society in it’s construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies).<sup>88</sup> It appears that the texts investigated so far strongly suggests that the church at Corinth conform to the cultural

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<sup>86</sup> For further discussion of all five final cultural categories see Robbins (1996a, 165–175; 1996b, 86–89).

<sup>87</sup> See chapter five for further discussion of how the discourse reflects normative Graeco-Roman cultural aspects with some noticeable differences.

<sup>88</sup> Robbins (1996a, 165–175; 1996b, 86–89) besides identifying the final cultural categories does not provide further discussion that would allow one to state the reasons for such classification. What I have done, however, is to use his classification and apply it to what is contained in the discourse in 1 Corinthians.

expectations and gendered structurings of the dominant culture by co-opting normative attitudes and behaviours consistent with the dominant culture. It seems apposite, therefore, to conclude that the discourse contained in 1 Corinthians, should be construed mainly as subcultural rhetoric. Further, it seems probable to suggest that the type of cultural position cultivated within 1 Corinthians be made up chiefly of subcultural rhetoric, where, Paul through the texts investigated above is encouraging, if not insisting that the Christian household at Corinth mimic these aspects of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture.

## **Conclusion**

From the discussion of this chapter, it seems noticeably evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians is culturally embedded within the patriarchal milieu of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. Further this chapter has shown, particularly in the section dealing with the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies), how Paul co-opts normative cultural aspects from the “secular” Graeco-Roman society of the day and transposes them in different ways for the Christian community at Corinth, and in doing so he directly highlights normative masculinity(ies) as an expected and legitimate Christian gendered normativity. The rhetorical argument used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians is based upon and exudes noticeable signs from the “secular” Graeco-Roman culture of the first and second century. These implicit signs, made more evident through intertextual analysis, may be seen in the shape of normative patriarchal cultural values (e.g., the household code system ) and commonplace cultural motifs (e.g., males/public/active/generative) which were used by Paul to construct notions of masculinity(ies) that were more often than not typical of the dominant stereotypes in relation to the performativity of masculinity(ies) from that ancient context.<sup>89</sup> In the next chapter I will continue briefly along this trajectory of thought. Using intertextual analysis I will demonstrate how these gendered phenomena (implicit signs) are utilised by Paul to

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Chapter three above.

construct and represent femininity(ies) in the text and also to offer possible reasons why he deploys these feminine structurings and meanings in his discourse in 1 Corinthians.

My purpose in this chapter has been to investigate how masculinity(ies) is constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. In order to achieve this purpose I have investigated certain key texts within 1 Corinthians against the backdrop of the ancient Mediterranean gendered system(s). My investigation may be summarised under several points.

(1) The rhetorical argument used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 is based upon and reveals noticeable connections with the secular Graeco-Roman culture of the first and second century. These implicit connections are evident in the shape of normative patriarchal understandings of hegemonic masculinity(ies). By his implementation of normative Graeco-Roman cultural practices and values, it demonstrates that Paul was, not surprisingly, totally enculturated within the dominant cultural surroundings in which he lived. As a result he adopted a commonplace cultural understanding of masculinity(ies) that linked rhetorical displays to gender performativity. At first it comes across to the auditor of 1 Corinthians that Paul presents himself as weak by standard cultural assumptions about rhetoricians, and this detracts from his masculinity and, in fact, renders him (un)masculine and effeminate. At a second glance, however, it turns out to be a rhetorical move in which he manages to assimilate and subsume his deficient masculinity into that of Christ's, which then turns out to be a demonstration of hypermasculinity. But because this hypermasculinity mimics the culturally dominant "regulatory body" (Butler 1993), it serves only to reiterate the very power that in the first place orchestrated its structuring, thus cementing the existing andronormative, gendered social hierarchy.<sup>90</sup> With regard to 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 I have argued that Paul simultaneously and paradoxically demonstrates divine hypermasculinity through the person of Jesus. I also have maintained that Paul here constructs himself as weak (feminine), only to state, on the other hand, that he is actually a "real man".

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<sup>90</sup> Cf. Butler (1993, x, xii, xviii).

(2) In his implementation of the father-children metaphor in 1 Cor. 4:14-21, Paul's discourse creates discursive gendered structurings that mimic the performativity of hegemonic masculinity(ies) as practised and re-iterated by the hegemonic gendered system(s) of that time. Paul's discursive argument in the text re-inscribes the dominant articulations of masculinity(ies) from the ancient world. In fact the power of this metaphor rests on the premise that masculinity(ies) out of necessity must reflect dominance and superiority. Paul's implementation of this metaphor serves inadvertently as a call for the re-enactment of hegemonic masculinity(ies), and in so doing it upholds the normative gendered hierarchy from the secular society as a standard for the Corinthian community.

(3) Paul's view on marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 implies or creates a negative notion of masculinity(ies) and possibly even (un)masculinity. Given the dominant gendered normativities of the ancient Mediterranean, the instructions by Paul in this text paints a more complex gendered matrix with some room for seemingly ambivalent construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies).

(4) I argued that the appeal for imitation in 4:6 and 11:1 is also, and maybe more significantly, an appeal for imitation of Paul's masculinity(ies). Using Moore (1996) as a dialogue partner I have argued that Paul's call for imitation (4:6; 11:1), was implicitly a call for gender performance, and in fact turns out to be a call for hypermasculinity which was aimed at the entire Corinthian congregation, including the women. As a result I maintain that the women too were called on to adopt this hypermasculine profile. Then using social and cultural texture I have demonstrated that on a larger scale and in light of the overall discourse of 1 Corinthians' imitation rhetoric also plays a role and has implications for the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). Implementing an inquiry into the final cultural categories of the social and cultural texture of 1 Corinthians, I argued that Paul accepted the basic androcentric cultural values and knowledge protocols of the wider society and in his articulations of masculinity(ies) mostly replicated the dominant cultural script. In my discussion of final cultural categories, with the use of two of the topics, namely, dominant culture and subculture, I argued that the discourse of 1 Corinthians appears to be comprised chiefly of subculture rhetoric. I also demonstrated that the text adopts normative gendered

cultural configurations and articulations from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture using its gendered systems (mainly the one-sex gendered model) and transposes those gendered aspects into the Christian community at Corinth with some amendment's to that of the hegemonic culture in its construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). My investigation concluded that the church at Corinth mainly conforms to the cultural expectations and gendered structurings of the dominant culture by co-opting normative attitudes and behaviours consistent with the dominant culture. Paul through the texts investigated above, therefore, is encouraging, if not insisting that the Christian household at Corinth mimic these aspects of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. In the following chapter this notion will be explored further as we progress to an investigation of the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.

## Chapter 5:

### The Construction(s) and Representation(s) of Femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians

#### Introduction

In this chapter the conversation moves to an investigation of the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. As mentioned previously in this thesis, gender delimitations and engendering brought about by the social constraints, including the regulatory schemas of that epoch, necessitated what was construed as ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) and permeated all social interactions in the ancient Mediterranean. In the discussion which follows I will demonstrate how certain passages within 1 Corinthians are scripted as feminine and very often construct and represent hegemonic views of femininity(ies) typical of Graeco-Roman society. Furthermore, I will argue, that the implicit gendered discourse of 1 Corinthians serves only to script women's bodies to mimetically perform along the lines of the dominant structurings of ideal femininity(ies). Similar to chapter four I will follow a gender-critical reading approach, informed by a cultural intertextual optic that zooms in on cultural intertexture as well as oral-scribal intertexture. I will focus my analysis upon the texts that I deem imperative to the performativity of femininity(ies). In this regard I will not limit my analysis to texts that only specifically mention woman as a *topos* of inquiry, but instead, I will look more closely at the rhetorical performances of femininity(ies) within the discourse of the texts.

I will demonstrate that Paul appropriates some of the leading notions of femininity(ies) from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture into his discourse in 1 Corinthians and in so doing creates replicated gendered structurings. By adopting normative Graeco-Roman cultural practices and values, it will become evident that Paul was totally enculturated within the dominant gendered frameworks from his cultural environment. As a result he adopted normative gendered protocol and cultural motifs from that context and "baptised" it and by so doing tried to ensure its normative for the Corinthian community. Before further investigation ensues it is perhaps useful at this stage to first reflect back upon a discussion around gender studies in Pauline literature that was started in chapter two above. This allows me to locate this current study among a larger body of writings and discussions that have

spanned more than two decades and also allows me to put into perspective why, especially in this chapter, I have opted to pursue this work in the manner that I have in this thesis.

In the past two and more decades a few biblical scholars have chartered relatively “new” courses in the study of gender within Pauline texts (Schüssler Fiorenza 1984a; Wire 1990b, 116–134; Castelli 1991b, 29–33). Navigating these murky waters with a keen interest to approach biblical texts with a gender-critical approach has demonstrated that Pauline texts are gendered not merely in the way in which they address women but also in the way arguments are constructed in terms of femininity(ies) (Marchal 2008, 86).<sup>1</sup> Wire (1990b, 1, 65–66) in her analysis of 1 Corinthians focuses upon the women prophets and their voices on the periphery of Pauline rhetoric in 1 Corinthians. Her study, which takes gender as a focal category, calls for an alternative approach to understanding Pauline texts and allows otherwise silenced voices within the discourse to be heard (Wire 1990b, 181). This type of investigation demonstrates the possibilities for re-reading Paul that does not require interpreting Paul as the archetypal and authoritative voice in the discourse but correctly positions him as someone engaged in rhetorical persuasion and, therefore, sees Paul as one of many voices in the text (Wire 1990a, 137–138).

Scholars like Schüssler Fiorenza (2000, 44; 2007, 103–104), Vander Stichele and Penner (2005a, 287–310; 2005c, 214–237), DeBaufre and Nasralla (2011, 161–174), as well as Bird (2011, 178), to name only a few out of many others, have demonstrated the efficacy of de-centering Paul, while paying particular attention to the rhetorical effects of his discursive writings.<sup>2</sup> This has led to investigations of Pauline literature that pay closer attention to non-normative voices that appear on the periphery of the discourse (Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, 103–104; DeBaufre and Nasrallah 2011, 166). Because power is always intersectional, gender as well as other power differentials such as race, ethnicity, sexuality and religion play

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Økland (2004, 39–77); Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 217); Marchal (2011, 146–160; 2014, 93–113).

<sup>2</sup>Scholars have displayed the effectiveness of considering other possibilities of engaging with Paul and his letters and not only decentering Paul as the authoritative rhetorical figure through whom to engage the text, but also decentering textual authority and opting for visual literacy from the broader material culture as a key hermeneutical lens to understand hegemonic gender constructions(s) and representation(s). See Lopez (2008, 2; 2012, 94, 101).



a significant role in understanding power dynamics of any text including ancient texts.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, gender construction(s) and representation(s) is also implicit in the discursivity of Paul's letter to the Corinthians and creates replicated gendered structurings that intermingle with the dominant notions of gender from that ancient world.

A gender-critical approach to investigating biblical texts allows texts to be interpreted as rhetorical arguments that form "a symbolic universe in which gender relations are constructed" (Kittredge 2000, 105). Dube (2003, 60) has argued in favour of feminist analyses that take into account texts that do not feature women explicitly, but still deal with women and the construction of femininity(ies) implicitly, because "gender constructions pervade all social spheres of life" as was the nature of the hegemonic gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean. Because Paul is a product of his cultural context, one cannot comprehend the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians without also understanding the gendered nature of the discourse. Using a gender-critical approach as a springboard, as I have done in the previous chapter, I now progress further by investigating how femininity(ies) is constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.

Certain passages within 1 Corinthians have frequently been isolated by biblical scholars as contentious with regard to their representation of women, namely, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. These texts have been analysed with a hermeneutical lens that seeks to analyse and reconstruct women and their role in early Christianity (Baumert 1996, 174–182; Ehrensperger 2004, 2; Crocker 2004, 148).<sup>4</sup> Crocker (2004, 156) argues that "there are not only two passages at issue when talking about the role and status of women in 1 Corinthians, namely, 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 14:34-35, but five (5:1-5; 7:1-40; 16:19; see also 1:11) or even six (15:5-8) passages". As mentioned above my research in this chapter does not centre only on passages that explicitly mention women in order to investigate the

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<sup>3</sup>This type of discussion will be explored further in chapter six of this thesis with a main emphasis upon gender as a mechanism through which power functions.

<sup>4</sup>See, chapter two of this thesis for further discussion and a literature review of the contemporary gender studies on 1 Corinthians.

role and status of women in the text, as countless other scholars have done, but rather focuses on a few examples that demonstrate the rhetorical construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) inherent in the discourse of the text.

That the rhetorical argument used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians is based upon and reveals noticeable signs from the “secular” Graeco-Roman culture of the first and second centuries CE has already been articulated in the previous chapter. In the current chapter I will move the discussion forward and in order to demonstrate that these implicit signs may be seen in the shape of normative patriarchal cultural values and commonplace cultural motifs which were used by Paul to restrict women in the Corinthian congregation(s) to their mundane but highly valued (positive shame) cultural role as subordinate householders. In so doing Paul re-inscribes and perpetuates normative structurings of femininity(ies) from the broader cultural system and transposes it into the Corinthian community.

The analysis as set forward in this chapter seeks to take seriously the complexities of the ancient Mediterranean gender system(s) and the nuanced discursive and ideological frameworks that interact with this complex engendering system(s) in order to shed some light on how femininity(ies) is constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. In order to achieve this objective I will first focus upon one specific topic within the text that I believe plays an integral part in the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies), namely, mother-infant metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:1-2. Thereafter, I will turn my attention to an intertextual investigation of 1 Cor. 11:8-9 and 1 Cor. 14:33-35.

In the first part of this chapter I will show that 1 Cor. 3:1-4 is a gendered text and that it invokes particular gendered configurations which are crucial to how ancient readers viewed gender as a significant marker of identity formation. In the second part of this chapter, using SRI’s cultural intertexture, as well as oral-scribal intertexture, I will explain how the discourse of 1 Corinthians constructs and represents femininity(ies) through its rhetoric in the selected texts of 1 Cor. 11:8-9 and 14:33-35. In so doing I wish to tie this chapter with the intertextual discussion of chapter four as well as set the stage for the ideological texture

analysis that follows in chapter six. In light of this I will engage in an intertextual analysis of key passages that have a bearing upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) with a focus on how these phenomena (implicit signs) are used by Paul and also possibly why he uses these phenomena in his discourse in 1 Corinthians.

## **1. An Analysis of Female Gender Construction(s) and Representation(s) in 1 Corinthians**

### **1.1. Mother-Infant as Construction(s) and Representation(s) of “Ideal” Femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthian**

1 Cor. 3:1-4 seems to be a strange text as Paul portrays himself as a nursing mother in relation to the Christian community in Corinth. Wanamaker (2003b, 129–130) has demonstrated that Paul’s use of the infant metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:1-4 functions ideologically to fashion Paul’s authoritative status over the community. In this respect Paul position’s himself as the “parent who knows what is best for the Corinthians and reflects the common ideological strategy of dissimulating social relations through metaphors which endow people with characteristics which they do not really possess” (Wanamaker 2003b, 130).<sup>5</sup> In 3:1-4 Paul employs a negative description of the Corinthians as infants in Christ (3:1), who have stayed in an infantile stage of development that prevents them from reaching maturity in their Christian faith. The purpose of this rhetorical strategy, according to Wanamaker (2003b, 130), was to highlight Paul’s supremacy and power in relation to his readers.

Scholars have attempted to make sense of this complex passage with the use of various interpretive strategies. Komaravalli (2007, 7, 9, 201–202) makes use of blending theory as posited by Fauconnier and Turner (2003) to interpret Paul’s use of complex household and building metaphors. Some of the submetaphors that he investigates from antiquity include the mother-infants relationship (1 Cor. 3:1-4) and the father-children relationship (1 Cor 4:14-21). These demonstrate the efficacy of understanding the everyday social and cultural *topos* of the ancient household as a complex metaphor used by Paul to

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<sup>5</sup>For further discussion that deals with the various ideological strategies, see chapter six of this thesis.

validate his relationship with the Corinthian community (Komaravalli 2007, 75). One of the primary relationships that functioned within the household dynamic was that of the mother as nurturer/caregiver to her offspring and the nursing mother figure. In 1 Cor. 3:1-4 Paul, somewhat suprisingly, maps the nursing mother rhetography on to himself to explicate his relationship with the Corinthians. Through the mapping invoked by the metaphor important characteristics of the nursing mother are transferred to Paul and serve to present him as the nurturer/sustainer of the Corinthian community.

The ideology implied in the discourse of 1 Cor. 3:1-4 has been a key strategy to try and interpret this text. Like Wanamaker (2003b, 130), Komaravalli (2007, 9) also sees Paul's ideological dissimulation of the use of the mother-infant metaphors in 3:1-4 as a tactical ideological move by Paul. He argues that the depiction of the Corinthian community as immature infants, functions to shame them, and gives Paul ideological power, similar to the maternal power that mothers have over their infants (Komaravalli 2007, 9).<sup>6</sup> The depiction of Paul as a nursing mother and not merely any mother, has significance as it ideologically positions him as archetypal in the lives of nursing infants. A further significance is that the nursing mother had even more significance to an infant's father at that stage of development as it was customarily the mother who fed the infant breast milk. His analysis is useful to demonstrate the ideological function of these submetaphors as a tool to assert and validate Paul's power and authority within the Corinthian community and stem the tide of factionalism that was brewing. He does not, however, take into account the gendered implications of these metaphors and how this impacts upon the text. In so doing Komaravalli (2007, 9) misses out on the underlying gendered script implicit in this text and so misses out on important interpretive nuances for the text.

Noticing a preponderance of "mother and birth terminology" in Galatians 4 and crediting this foci in Paul's discourse to an apparent "counter-patriarchal logic" in his

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<sup>6</sup>Also see Barrett (1968, 80) who argues that the milk metaphor as employed in 1 Cor. 3:1-4 is used pejoratively by Paul to underscore the Corinthian congregations lack of spirituality. Other non pejorative uses of this metaphor may be seen in 1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:12 and a number of other ancient texts (Barrett 1968, 80).

theology Kahl (2000, 42) focusses on the “mother Paul” metaphor in Galatians 4:19. She mentions that

she/he [Paul] is painfully trying to rebirth his/her Galatian children in the shape (μορφή) of Christ. With only a few exceptions this striking ‘transgendering’ Pauline self-description in terms of symbolic birth-labor has usually been ignored—it does not fit into any of the standard Pauline interpretations and stereotypes. But precisely Gal.4:19 could be a key to understanding the meaning of sex/gender-unity in Gal.3:28 and in Galatians as a whole (Kahl 2000, 42-43).

Similarly I argue that the interconnected mother-infant metaphors in 1 Corinthians should not be ignored and should instead be understood from the perspective of constructing and representing gender in the text. I suggest that a complex gendered matrix lurks behind the text and plays a role in constructing and re-inforcing hegemonic notions of femininity(ies) and paradoxically also masculinity(ies).

From an ancient Mediterranean perspective and in light of the dominant gender system(s) of that epoch engendering was also a vital component of the “cultural intertexture” (Robbins 1996b, 129) that resulted by implementing these metaphors. I agree with the assertion that Paul’s use of the mother-infant metaphors serves to shame the Corinthian community as immature spiritual babies who still require the metaphorical breast milk of teaching from Paul their mother and, therefore, the metaphors function to subordinate the Corinthians under Paul (Komaravalli 2007, 201–202). Similarly I also see how the metaphors serve the rhetorical function of challenging any authority claims by elite members of the Corinthian community founded on the “potential superior wisdom, knowledge, or spirituality as evaluated by the secular society” (Komaravalli 2007, 91).<sup>7</sup> This assessment on its own, however, does not pay attention to the gendered implications of the text in light of

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<sup>7</sup>Cf. DeBaufre and Nasrallah (2011, 170).

the dominant gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean and in so doing seeks only to confront the text from the perspective of social status and power.

From this interpretive vantage point, the analysis merely serves to re-inscribe Paul's power and authority and perpetuates a centering of Paul as well as further perpetuating "sexist, racist, and colonialist legacies of the Pauline tradition" (DeBaufre and Nasrallah 2011, 166). Paul's use of the mother-infant metaphors, not only serves to shame the Corinthian community (Komaravalli 2007, 201–202), but also serves to re-inscribe a dominant and normalising notion of femininity(ies). In so doing it replicates and reinforces this hegemonic structuring of gender. Kahl (2000, 43) notes further in her analysis of Galatians 4:19 that "the female is dramatically re-centered in Gal. 4 as the 'mother-chapter' of Paul". She fails to see, however, that this centering of the female and the procreative symbolism in the text, also re-inscribes one of the archetypal constructions and representations of femininity(ies) in the ancient Mediterranean. In so doing the discourse serves to support the dominant structuring of femininity(ies), ensuring that this gender performance as women primarily as baby makers is firmly established in *habitus*.

Paul's use of the mother-infant complex of metaphors in 1 Corinthians serves the analogous purpose of scripting femininity(ies) along these lines. By doing this it seems to jettison any alternative and possible boundary crossing construction(s) and representation(s) of feminine identity(ies) and serves only to further concretise strict gender normativities that primarily scripted female bodies to the interiority of the household with the primary purpose of household management and procreation.<sup>8</sup>

According to Komoravalli (2007, 76), "This relationship [the relationship of the nursing mother with her offspring] presupposes a giver, who is dominant in the relationship, and a receiver, who is dependant in the relationship, where this particular relationship forms

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<sup>8</sup>See the study by Baker (1998, 221–242) and her assertion that ancient Jewish discourse viewed wives' bodies as houses. So that not only were wives to be inside the house, that is the physical or spatial location, but also that wives themselves were regarded as the house with their bodies taking on the space of a house.

the key aspect in Paul's application of the metaphor".<sup>9</sup> Given the gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean as delineated in chapter three, the aforementioned statement by Komaravalli (2007, 76), as well as a similar understanding posited by Gaventa (2007, 49), fails to take heed of an important aspect implicit in this depiction. The articulation of an active or dominant role and passive or submissive role is also primarily a gendered articulation and plays a role in constructing and representing gender normativities.

The text of 1 Cor. 3:1-5 with its household metaphors of mother, infant, and breast milk evokes a rhetographic image of a mother breast feeding her child in the minds of the auditors. This rhetograph is used in the rhetology of the verses to place Paul in a position of absolute dominance over the Corinthians who are like infants in need of maternal parenting. In this regard and in light of the hegemonic gender system(s) of that time period this gendered performance by Paul would in fact serve to re-inscribe normative notions of hegemonic masculinity(ies) as it renders Paul as the active and dominant "giver" and the Corinthians as the passive and submissive "receivers". This kyriarchal depiction also carries with it ideological ramifications as it constructs a rhetographic scenario that positions Paul at the top of the hierarchical gendered pecking order and the Corinthians are left feminised as infants at the bottom of the gender hierarchy.

A direct result of this is an ideological construction(s) and representation(s) of ideal notions of masculinity(ies). From the outset what seems first to be a diminishing of masculine virtue, when Paul takes on a role that is deemed feminine in accordance with ancient gender standards. In fact turns out to be a rhetorical verification of virile masculinity(ies) that serves to buttress Paul's dominance over the Corinthian community. And further, serves to subordinate the Corinthian community to an effeminate role as passive subordinate. Not only does the use of these metaphors serve to authenticate Paul's authority and dominance over the Corinthian community shaming the Corinthians as immature and still needing baby food as Komoravalli (2007, 75–76) has argued. It also serves to construct and

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<sup>9</sup>Cf. Gaventa (2007, 49) who holds a similar understanding and positions Paul as the active participant who feeds the passive Corinthian infants with milk.

represent gender identities which mimics the normative notions of archetypal gender roles from that ancient context. In doing so the nursing mother metaphor and the infant metaphor actually further validates an image of Paul that is dominant and authoritative and, therefore, masculine, while serving to re-inscribe and maintain his position within the Corinthian community. This is not the end of the efficacy of these metaphors, however, and I argue further in the what follows that this metaphor simultaneously constructs and represents ideal femininity(ies) as well. In fact I argue that this complex metaphor, in light of the social and cultural gendered normativities of the ancient Mediterranean, may be seen to do two things regarding gender. Not only does it construct and represent masculinity(ies) but also femininity(ies).

In her analysis of 1 Cor. 3:1-2 Gaventa (1996, 101; 2007, 41) identifies the propensity of New Testament scholars in their analyses of this text to often focus exclusively on one side of the relationship between Paul and the Corinthian congregation. The side that most often receives attention, in critique of this passage has been the Corinthians as infants, particularly zooming in on what this state of spiritual immaturity means in light of Paul's teachings and preachings to them.<sup>10</sup> Gaventa (1996, 101), however, cautions that

we cannot understand the drama presupposed in 1 Cor. 3:1-2 until we take into consideration both of the characters—not only the child who may or may not be ready to begin eating solid food but also the mother who has thus far nursed the child with milk. That is, Paul's presentation of himself as a nursing mother suggests that 1 Cor 3:1-2 illumines Paul's understanding of the nature of the apostolic task.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Cf. Barrett (1968, 80–81); Fee (1987, 122–123); Collins (1999, 139–141).

<sup>11</sup>Paul's use of a nurturing mother image is not peculiar to 1 Corinthians; see for example 1 Thess. 2:7-8 and Gal.4:19. Paul also uses paternal images to characterise his relationship with his correspondents as may be seen in 1 Thess. 2:11-12; Gal. 4:19; and of course, as we have seen, 1 Cor. 4:14-21. Collins (1999, 41) calls for a distinction in application of paternal and maternal images. He maintains, "The paternal image draws attention to Paul's ministry of evangelization, his having engendered children in Christ (1 Cor 4:16; Phlm 10). The maternal image evokes Paul's pastoral care, his devoted nurture of those he has evangelized (cf. 1 Thess 2:11-12)". From this example, however, it is not hard to notice the blatant patriarchal and androcentric interpretive assumptions in this delineation which linked the paternal imagery to that of active, penetrative, child producing (active male seed) evangelisation and relates the maternal imagery to that of passive, nurturing (passive female seed) pastoral



Gaventa (1996, 101, 112; 2007, 8, 177) investigates the imagery of Paul as nursing mother to the Corinthians to highlight the fact that Paul is not only re-establishing his authority, but in his explication of his apostolic authority he is ushering in a radically different kind of authority compared to any of the other church leaders in Corinth. Her emphasis, however, is not on the gendered nature of the text in relation to how the text constructs and represents femininity(ies). She argues that Paul's metaphorical statement that he had given the Corinthians milk to drink (4:2) foregrounds him as a nursing mother or wet nurse to the Corinthians and that this might have called into question his masculinity (Gaventa 1996, 101–113).<sup>12</sup> Given the environment of the ancient gender system(s), it seems reasonable, if not “natural”, to imagine that “I gave you milk to drink” (γάλα ὑμῶς ἐπότισα) would cause readers of this text to suspect that Paul himself was not a “real man”.<sup>13</sup> “By actively taking upon himself a role that could only be played by a woman, he effectively concedes the culturally predisposed battle for his masculinity” (Gaventa 1996, 110). The argument by Gaventa (1996, 101–102; 2007, 41–42,), may be summarised as follows: first, by employing maternal imagery a focus on the ancient household family structure is centralised;<sup>14</sup> second, Paul's appropriation of this metaphor to himself constructs an image of masculinity(ies) that seemingly subverts normative notions of ideal masculinity(ies) and has the concomitant effect of calling into question Paul's masculinity(ies) and also leaves him vulnerable to derisive attacks by onlookers as weak and useless;<sup>15</sup> third, this metaphor serves to introduce “the later

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care. These types of gendered assumptions are not completely dissimilar to the dominant notions of gender from the ancient Mediterranean world. For an investigation that posits Paul as a mother to the Galatians and a transgressor of dominant gendered norms see Lopez (2007, 154–161).

<sup>12</sup>Contra Yarbrough (1995, 32) who argues that it was a male nurse (*nutritor*), rather than a nursing mother or wet nurse, who occupies the imagery in 1 Cor. 3:1–2. For further discussion of this postulation see Yarbrough (1995, 126–141) and Gaventa (2007, 45–46). Cf. Bradley (1991, 37–75). Even if the imagery in 1 Cor. 3:1–2 refers to a male *nutritor*, Paul's association with such a role, given first and second century Mediterranean gender standards would nevertheless still impinge on Paul's masculinity and render him effeminate.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Gaventa (1996, 109).

<sup>14</sup>According to Hellerman (2001, 93) the primary metaphor that Paul uses to re-establish social order in his writings is the ancient Mediterranean family. Cf. Hellerman (2001, 99–108) for a discussion that traces the use of family terminology in 1 Corinthians.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Burrus (2005, 65).

series of metaphors in which apostles are compared with farmers and builders, and prepares the way for further remarks about the nature of the apostolic task” (Gaventa 1996, 102).<sup>16</sup>

It is my contention that the use of the maternal imagery by Paul also centres a particular construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the text and by doing so paradoxically only serves to buttress dominant notions of masculinity(ies). Marchal (2009, 124) asserts that “the way Paul briefly depicts himself as a nursing mother to the Corinthian assembly (3:1-3) neither qualifies nor undermines these authoritative dynamics of social control in continuity with patriarchy, ethnic privilege, and imperialism”. Within the first and second century ancient Mediterranean world, it was a common topic within Jewish, Christian, and pagan circles for rhetoricians and writers alike, to compare unfavourably the outward ostentation of women to inward modesty (σωφροσύνη) (Miller 1997, 71; Johnson 2001, 199).<sup>17</sup> Internal propriety/modesty in the first and second centuries was depicted in many stereotypical ways, namely, dressing sensibly and not ostentatiously, and also more importantly for the purposes of this chapter, by being a good mother and a good subordinate householder (Mounce 2000, 104; Johnson 2001, 204; Winter 2003, 72).

I discussed in chapter three, within the first and second century milieu motherhood was seen as the archetypal role for women in that epoch, with the ideal construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) being directly linked to women’s ability to conceive, rear children and manage their households.<sup>18</sup> It has also been demonstrated that within Graeco-Roman society both culturally and legislatively an attempt was made to restrict women to this role and define femininity(ies) in terms of motherhood.<sup>19</sup> Paul’s “reference” and “allusion” (Robbins 1996b, 58) to motherhood in the passage of 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 thus seems

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<sup>16</sup>Cf. Gaventa (2007, 8, 177, n.1).

<sup>17</sup>For primary text evidence that supports this assertion see pages 81-82 above. For other extant examples demonstrating the commonplace cultural motif of outward vs. inward modesty see Seneca, *Ad Helviam*, 16.3-5; Diodorus, 12.21.1; Juvenal, *Satires*, 6.458-59 & 6.501-3; Plutarch, *Advice*, 12, 17, 26, 30-32; 1 Enoch 8:1-2; Testament of Reuben 5:1-5; Perictione 135; Seneca, *To Helvia* 16:3-4; *Sentences of Sextus* 235; Epictetus, *Encheiridion* 40; Philo, *Special Laws* 1:102 [taken from Pomeroy (1999, 6, 7, 9, 10); Johnson (2001, 199); and Winter (2003, 98, 100, 104)].

<sup>18</sup>See further Hellerman (2001, 33); Martin (2004, 79).

<sup>19</sup>See chapter three (especially pages 77-80) above for the discussion of motherhood and childbearing and the significance of this role within the ancient Mediterranean.

unexceptionable in relation to his cultural milieu and the ideological implications of its sex/gender system(s). The use of maternal imagery through the use of the metaphor of the nursing mother in the text constructs and represents “motherhood—as—femininity” and re-establishes, the normative and highly praised role of motherhood and childbearing held within the ancient Mediterranean.

Ancient Mediterranean discursive thought and praxis continued to conceptualise women as mere incubators of reproduction, instead of as partners in reproductive labour (Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. 14.2.299).<sup>20</sup> Galen asks, “And what is semen? Clearly the active principal of the animal, the material principle being the menstrual blood” (Galen, *On The Natural Faculties*. 2.3.86). As a result, women were rendered passive, receptive, docile, bound up with inferiority, and eventually alienable. The use of the maternal imagery in this passage furthermore constructs a rhetographic picture of femininity(ies) as being equal to motherhood and implies that to be a woman one had to fulfil the normative obligations of motherhood and the roles and duties that this encompassed within that epoch.

By his adoption of normative Graeco-Roman gendered practices and discursive values, it seems that Paul was totally enculturated within the dominant cultural environment in which he lived. Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 235) assert that

any notion, however, that Paul offers a radically different value system or politics needs serious reevaluation: one cannot overlook the dominant socio-cultural (and rhetorical) paradigms that control his articulation of gender identity in this text [1 Cor. 11:2-16]. There is no area “outside” of the realm of the Greco-Roman gendered cultural context in Paul; it is the cultural mode of discourse that Paul affirms, which is not to say that it is a “patriarchal” or “male” framework *in toto*, or that “egalitarian” notions are in principle excluded. The picture is more complex than that.

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<sup>20</sup>See footnote 19 of chapter three of this thesis.

By employing this particular stereotypical gendered image in his rhetoric and describing himself as a nursing mother Paul inadvertently re-inscribes the hegemonic notion of women as docile and reproductive. The notion that reproduction was the primary role of women is especially prominent in the “women as fertile soil model” and the “one-sex” model.<sup>21</sup> This valorising of the maternal body in the discourse of the text serves merely to subordinate and marginalise women in the Corinthian community to fulfil only those roles that were suitable to the normative patriarchal cultural tradition of the first and second century milieu.<sup>22</sup>

At stake in this depiction of Paul as a nursing mother, therefore, is not only male honour or female shame. More importantly, from the perspective of this thesis, however, what is at stake is gender construction (s) and representation (s) and what implications this has on understanding the text. It seems that the rhetographic image of Paul in the discourse of the text represents Paul as (un)masculine. This representation does not, however, subvert the dominant gendered hierarchy polarising masculine and feminine and inadvertently only serves to further re-inscribe male domination and androcentrism. Using a notion of power as developed by Foucault (1980b; 1997c, 163–173), Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 115) stress the fact that “every act of subversion easily becomes a reification of the very power being subverted in the first place”. This reconstitution or sedimenting of power is also made evident in the performativity of gender as Butler (1993, xix, 193; 2002, 48–50) has eruditely articulated.

Vander Stichele and Penner (2009, 115) note that “‘manliness’ and ideal gender performances were adopted from society and reinscribed on early Christian bodies”. The re-inscription and performance of dominant notions of femininity(ies) by Paul served to reproduce the dominant articulations of gender from Graeco-Roman culture and in so doing mimicked imperial power and domination in his own bodily *hexis*. Paul, may suffer vituperation and ridicule in light of his association with ideal femininity(ies), but the

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<sup>21</sup>See chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>22</sup>The notion of the valorising of the maternal body is gleaned from Perkins (2007, 330).

gendered logic that upholds this very understanding is still firmly established and left unscathed even after Paul's association with the nursing mother metaphor.<sup>23</sup>

Hegemonic masculinity(ies) as constructed and represented in the dominant gendered social system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean still lingers on fully concretised in *habitus* and using the masculine body as "regulatory body" (Butler 1993, 1) to achieve its hegemony. This kind of adoption of normative cultural motifs and traditions and co-opting them into a new context is of course what Robbins (1996b, 58–59) terms reference and allusion. Both aspects are embedded in the discourse of 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 and serve to reassert normative cultural motifs, typical of the sex/gender system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean and the Graeco-Roman household code tradition. Two interpretive possibilities emerge in my mind out of three rhetographic gendered scenarios taken from the nursing mother-infant metaphors. Applied to Paul the rhetographic image of Paul's gendered body that appears may be seen as follows:

#### 1.1.1. **Compromised (Un)masculinity:**

This construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the text creates the rhetographic image or scenario that Paul has a negotiated body/hybridized gendered body that mimics the hegemonic gendered ideologies of Graeco-Roman culture.<sup>24</sup> In associating himself with or assimilating a common feminine construction(s) and representation(s) of gender this creates a rhetographic image (i.e., it creates an image in a human's mind based on social or cultural knowledge) of himself as (un)masculine or effeminate by ideal gendered standards. The mother-infant metaphors create the rhetographic image of a mother nursing her infant. This invokes a normal nurturing situation that everyone was familiar with and then asks the reader to apply that image to a different situation, namely, the relation of Paul to the Corinthian community. Assimilation of this stereotypically feminine role serves to position Paul as nurturer and sustainer of the Corinthian community. From a gender-critical

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<sup>23</sup>Conway (2008, 116) has argued that female metaphors in the ancient world could actually re-inscribe normative masculine ideologies. Simply because feminine imagery is employed in a metaphor does not necessitate the representation(s) and construction(s) of feminine identity(ies). Cf. Conway (2008, 107–125).

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Lopez (2011, 91).

perspective, and in light of the hegemonic engendering stereotypes, however, it also serves to feminise Paul and in so doing it re-inscribes normative gendered structurings from the dominant culture and positions masculinity(ies) as superior to femininity(ies). Paul as a nursing mother is a reversal of heteronormative and androcentric ideologies of hegemonic notions of ideal masculinity(ies) in light of ancient Mediterranean constructions of masculinity(ies) and renders him (un)masculine.

### 1.1.2. **Essentialised Femininity(ies):**

On the other hand this image implies a hierarchical relation of mother to child where the mother knows what is best for the child so the graphic images move metaphorically to a statement about who Paul sees himself to be in relation to the Corinthian Christians. In doing this there are gendered relations that are implicitly encoded in the text. This construction(s) and representation(s) of gender, through the use of these metaphors, creates the rhetographic image or scenario that re-inscribes the maternal and progenerative (woman as passive soil for procreation) gender role for women and so constructs and represents femininity(ies) that is in accordance with prescriptive traditions on women essentialising them as mothers and subordinate householders and mimicking the ideal gendered stereotypes in relation to women.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.1.3. **Ambivalent Engendering:**

This construction(s) and representation(s) of gender creates the rhetographic image or scenario that Paul's (un)masculine, ambivalent, gender blurring body may be seen as a new gendered configuration. This rhetographic scenario is hardly impossible given the hegemonic one-sex gender model as discussed in chapter three. This understanding calls for a more complex structuring of Paul's gendered configuration when he assimilates the identity of a nursing mother to himself. By doing this he re-configures his own bodily *hexis*, prioritising ambivalence and the notion of a negotiated/hybridized body (Lopez 2011, 90). In this instance Paul's body is neither purely or only masculine, or simultaneously (un)masculine

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. Liew (2011, 180).

and, therefore, feminine; but also liminal or gender blurring given the dominant articulations of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) of the ancient context.<sup>26</sup>

Given the dominant structurings of gender from that epoch I am more inclined at this stage of my analysis to posit an interpretation that combines the first two rhetographic scenarios, namely, compromised (un)masculinity(ies) and essentialised femininity(ies). This view interprets Paul's assimilation of the mother metaphor as a re-inscription of standard gendered normativities that firmly establishes and perpetuates androcentrism and patriarchy. Furthermore it positions men as superordinate to women on the hierarchical gendered spectrum with women being located into the culturally acceptable space of the interiority of the household and its systemic structures of domination and oppression.

### **1.2. An Intertextual Analysis of 1 Corinthians 11:8-9 and 14:33-35**

Intertexture now moves this investigation a step further serving as a link to trace the interaction between the material within the text to phenomena outside the strictures of 1 Corinthians. Robbins (1996a, 96) argues for a system of intertextual connectivity and asserts that just as words are linked to each other in the construction of any argument so too texts are linked to other texts. According to this argument in fact, texts are involved in interactive processes of configuration and reconfiguration, simultaneously configuring and reconfiguring external phenomena within a certain language framework. It has been demonstrated that this language framework may embody outside phenomena directly or indirectly and takes place in two primary ways. First, it may occur by accurate representation of external material, and second, it may occur by adding on to extemporaneous material by configuring events that relates to phenomena outside the text (Robbins 1996b, 40). .

Robbins (1996b, 40) defines intertexture as, "[A] text's representation of, reference to, and use of phenomena in the 'world' outside the text being interpreted". It is the interactive working together of the discourse in the text with external aspects both material and physical inclusive of things like "historical events, texts, customs, values, roles, institutions, and

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<sup>26</sup>Cf. Liew (2011, 132, 133).

systems” (1996b, 40). A main objective of intertextual analysis is the awareness of the manner in which texts configure and reconfigure aspects of the world external to the text. This occurs in a number of different ways, and the text may mimic another text using various mechanisms to do so, including aspects such as: people, traditions, and rhetoric. The net result, however, is a richly textured text filled with nuances of various texts, cultures, traditions and socio-historical aspects (Robbins 1996b, 40). What this brings to my investigation of 1 Corinthians, is the ability to uncover how the discourse of 1 Corinthians configures and reconfigures aspects from the outside world. What will become evident in what follows is that the discourse of 1 Corinthians is merely mimicking the social and cultural tapestry of the outside world, including its gendered protocols and structurings.

Intertexture as formulated by SRI covers four areas that are crucial for understanding written texts. (1) Oral-scribal intertexture concerns the use of written texts that are external to the text being studied. The language of these texts may be cited or alluded to. (2) Historical intertexture considers events that have occurred that impact on a text. (3) Social intertexture deals with the social knowledge that is available to those people who live in a particular society. (4) Cultural intertexture involves special cultural knowledge that is insider knowledge for people of Jewish or Greek or Roman origins (Robbins 1996a, 96). For the purposes of this chapter I will employ only two of the above-mentioned types of intertexture, and I will make use of only those subtextures of intertexture that I deem appropriate to formulate my argument. The main reason for this is due to spatial constraints in this thesis and secondly the belief that a focus on two intertextures will be adequate to illustrate my objectives in this chapter. The two types of intertexture that my analysis will focus on are oral-scribal intertexture and cultural intertexture.<sup>27</sup>

The way in which I will set out to achieve my goals in this section of the chapter is sketched out in what follows. First, I will engage in a cultural, intertextual analysis of 1 Corinthians. The reason for this is because, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, and also as

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<sup>27</sup>For a full delineation of the various textures of intertexture with their respective subtextures and examples of their application see Robbins (1996a, 96–143; 1996b, 40–70).



has been demonstrated in chapter three, Paul uses normative gendered assumptions and cultural conventions from the dominant cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and transposes these phenomena as normative and normalising for the Christian setting at Corinth. Secondly, I will investigate the oral-scribal intertexture of 1 Cor. 11:8-9 drawing our attention to the fact that Paul employs external texts to validate his culturally founded promulgations, but also, that he makes use of these external texts to transfer his assertions as normative and normalising Christian praxis for the Corinthians community.

### **1.2.1. Cultural Intertexture**

According to Robbins (1996b, 58), not only are texts connected to other texts, but they also share a correlation with other cultures producing out of this interrelatedness “[c]ultural knowledge” or “‘insider’ knowledge”. It is my contention that the gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean can also be described in an analogous manner. This implies that the Corinthian congregation would understand Paul’s assertions in light of the normative and normalising gendered regulatory schemas of their world. Robbins (1996b, 58) argues further that this sort of knowledge is familiar specifically to those who are part of a certain culture or by those who have come to know the intricacies of a particular culture due to some sort of learning or interaction. Cultural intertexture, therefore, provides the interpreter with an opportunity to have a peak into the text and investigate the cultural intricacies and idiosyncrasies inhabiting the text and used within it. These cultural phenomena manifest themselves in a variety of ways and may take the shape of “word and concept patterns and configurations; values, scripts, codes, or systems and myths” and occur “in a text either through reference or allusion and echo” (Robbins 1996b, 58).

In chapter four I illustrated that 1 Corinthians comprises standard, gendered, cultural presuppositions and normativities adopted from the hegemonic Graeco-Roman culture. In particular I investigated, those arguments related to the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) within the discourse of the Letter to the Corinthians. In this chapter I take the conversation further and focus upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in an attempt to showcase that the discourse of the text is firmly established in

the gendered meanings and structurings from that epoch. In this part of the thesis I aim briefly to pick up on this trajectory and further embed this assertion in what follows.

My intention for displaying the cultural normativity of Paul's discourse in the preceding chapter was directed at demonstrating the cultural gendered logic that undergirds his argumentation. My focus now, in this section of the chapter is directed at illustrating with the use of intertexture that Paul's dependency upon commonplace cultural motifs and traditions may be regarded as cultural intertexture. This occurs when Paul co-opts the dominant androcentric and patriarchal gendered practices from the broader cultural environment and ushers it into the Christian community at Corinth as if it were a standard Christian praxis. In so doing Paul is a man of his age, who constructs gendered dynamics that mimic some of the leading cultural practices and as a result women are marginalised to perform according to the cultural regulatory schemas that script their bodiliness.

As mentioned before, "A *reference* is a word or phrase that points to a personage or tradition known to people on the basis of tradition" (Robbins 1996b, 58). And, "An *allusion* is a statement that presupposes a tradition that exists in textual form, but the text being interpreted is not attempting to 'recite' the text."<sup>28</sup> I will argue that both of these aspects are evident in Paul's rhetoric and illuminating this aspect will help shed further light on the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the text and also possibly why the text scripts the feminine identity(ies) in this way.

Paul clearly participates in terms of what Robbins (1996a, 110; 1996b, 58) terms reference and allusion. This may be seen in his co-opting of standard cultural assumptions and values taken from the hegemonic patriarchal and androcentric society in which he lived, and transplanting these cultural standards into a Christian setting. This comes about when Paul uses the mother-infant metaphors in 1 Cor. 3:1-3 (especially v.2) which foregrounds normative household relationships and imagery and locates mothers as baby makers and subordinate household managers. That the instructions given by Paul here replicate the

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<sup>28</sup>Emphasis his.

standard gendered hierarchies of the ancient Mediterranean, and are firmly rooted in normative cultural gendered assumptions, have already been demonstrated in the sub section that preceded this one and also from the discussions in chapter three above.

Another instance that cultural intertexture via reference and allusion occurs may be seen in the rhetorical unit of 1 Cor. 11:3-15,<sup>29</sup> but particularly v.3, which discusses gender hierarchies in the worship setting at Corinth.<sup>30</sup> Wire (1990b, 120) asserts, “In Paul’s definition of ‘head’ the male has been linked with Christ and thereby with God, whereas the female has been linked with man”. The primacy given to men in the constructed gendered hierarchy of this text is hardly exceptional by ancient gendered standards and foregrounds normative hierarchical and patriarchal household relationships and imagery merely replicating standard gendered structurings from the hegemonic gendered models of that world.<sup>31</sup> The basic family unit of ancient Graeco-Roman society was the household headed by the *κῆρυς* (the head of the traditional Greek household) or the *paterfamilias* (the head of the traditional Roman household) at the apex of their respective households with autocratic control. Then followed the wife and matron of the household who was regarded as subordinate.

The household structure at Corinth seems to mimic the traditional household structure, the only difference being a theologising and Christianising that restructures God at the apex of this hierarchy and positioned as the *κῆρυς*, and after God in analogous manner, Christ is ranked above man and woman. The understanding posited by Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 217) seems appropriate here,

[W]e understand “theological” formulations and practices of argumentation to be specifically Christian cultural reconfigurations of ancient modes of communication that are truly “incarnational”—i.e., they take on all forms and functions of ancient discourse,

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<sup>29</sup>For the view that men and women and not only husbands and wives are implicated in this passage see Thiselton (2000, 822).

<sup>30</sup>Cf. Hearon (2006, 615-616). Contra Fee (1987, 503-504) who does not see gender hierarchy implicit in this text.

<sup>31</sup>See pages 106-112 above and the sub-section that deals with the father-children metaphors.

manifesting the intricacies of power (and its structures of domination and control), the value-laden agenda, and the gendered nature of the language and concepts utilized to meet the various ends of persuasion.

It is hardly surprising that women take the subordinate position below men, because this gendered hierarchy merely replicates the normative gendered structurings from the broader socio-cultural system(s).

Another example of cultural intertexture that operates through reference and allusion may be seen in 1 Cor. 14:33-35. This text too may be seen to replicate normative gendered relations and also household code *topoi* that subordinate and mute women to perform according to their culturally predisposed position as docile subordinates.<sup>32</sup> Plutarch demonstrates the general marginalisation of women and also a typical gendered ideology when he asserts: “[T]he best woman is she about whom there is the least talk among persons outside regarding either censure or commendation, feeling that the name of the good woman, like her person, ought to be *shut up indoors* and never go out” (Moralia 3. *Bravery of Woman*, 243).<sup>33</sup>

Further evidence substantiating this assertion occurs with the appearance of *σιγάτωσαν* in 1 Cor. 14:34.<sup>34</sup> Verner (1983, 92) mentions that silence was a normative household *topos* and, “[H]ousehold management *topos* held up silence as a desirable trait in women”.<sup>35</sup> Further confirmation of silence as a normative household code *topos* may be seen

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<sup>32</sup>Eriksson (1998, 91–92) commenting on the traditional cultural motif of subordinating and marginalising women, in his investigation of 1 Corinthians 14:33-36, mentions, “This reflects the contemporary view that wives voicing opinions in public would shame their husbands, but due to this *κυριοῦ*- institution, which made all women subject to a male authority, it is incorrect to limit the application of the regulation to married women”.

<sup>33</sup>My emphasis. For further discussions reflecting common gender stereotypes for women see chapter three of this thesis. Cf. Aristotle (*Politics*.1260a.20-24).

<sup>34</sup>Scholars have demonstrated that the silence called for in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 does not mean absolute silence and also does not cover all forms of speaking in the worship setting. In fact, given that women are actively engaged in speaking according to 1 Cor. 11:2-16 this notion of complete and unambiguous silence as well as an interpretation that posits the prohibition to be one that covers all forms of speaking appears unlikely. For further discussion see Wire (1990b, 157); Collins (1999, 521); Thiselton (2000, 1152, 1155-1156). Contra Fee (1987, 706-707) who regards the silencing of women to be in relation to all forms of public speaking in the assembly and merits this strict prohibition to be the result of a non-Pauline interpolation.

<sup>35</sup>Also see Pomeroy (1999, 9–10).

in Aristotle's statement "silence (σιγή) gives grace to woman—though that is not the case likewise with a man" (*Politics*.1260a.20-24).<sup>36</sup> This demonstrates that the starting point of Paul's rhetoric and the gendered relationships that he promulgates as Christian values in 1 Cor. 3:1-3; 11:3-15 and 14:33-35 are basically the leading cultural practices taken from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture in which he lives.<sup>37</sup> Cultural intertexture via reference and allusion demonstrates that normative Graeco-Roman household code imagery and standard gendered hierarchies form the backbone of Paul's rhetorics restricting women to their mundane cultural role as subordinate, marginalised household keeper.

### 1.2.2. Oral-Scibal Intertexture

A strategy that a text can use to configure and reconfigure itself is the explicit or implicit appropriation of language from external texts. Such implementation of outside texts, whether written or oral, have been classified by SRI as performing oral-scribal intertexture. The primary objective of this subtexture is aimed at delineating how those external texts have been configured and reconfigured by a particular writer to structure his/her argument and also what the rhetorical implications of this interconnectedness might imply for the investigation of a text (Robbins 1996a, 121; Robbins 1996b, 40).

Robbins (1996b, 40) has observed five essential techniques to identify the manner in which language in a text utilises external language from other texts. These may be classified as follows: "recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration, narrative amplification, and thematic elaboration".<sup>38</sup> In this sub-section I will engage in an oral-scribal intertextual analysis of 1 Cor. 11:8-9.<sup>39</sup> The intertextual configuration that appears in vv. 8-9 takes the

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<sup>36</sup>My emphasis.

<sup>37</sup>There are of course other instances that also demonstrate cultural intertexture in 1 Corinthians. I have limited my investigation to only these passages as it is sufficient to prove my assertions in this chapter.

<sup>38</sup>For further discussion and an articulation of the various types see Robbins (1996a, 97–108; 1996b, 40–58).

<sup>39</sup>There are of course other instances of oral-scribal intertexture throughout 1 Corinthians (e.g., 1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Cor. 14:34). Robbins (1996a, 120–124) demonstrates the efficacy of an oral-scribal intertexture analysis of 1 Corinthians 9. The purposes to which this thesis is directed, however, it is not clear to me that engaging with this discussion will aid my gender-critical analysis or help me to better comprehend the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. I have opted to engage 1 Cor. 11:8-9 mainly due to the preference of New Testament scholars invested in feminist critical inquiry over the past few decades to focus on these passages when studying gender in 1 Corinthians. For further discussion of this aspect see chapter two of this thesis. In My master's thesis I did a similar oral-scribal intertexture analysis of 1 Timothy 2:8 and especially 1 Timothy 2:13-15. The similarities here are striking and in itself may be regarded

shape of recitation. Robbins (1996b, 41) defines recitation as “the transmission of speech or narrative, from either oral or written tradition, in the exact words in which the person has received the speech or narrative or in different words”.<sup>40</sup> According to Robbins (1996b, 41–43) recitation occurs in seven basic ways.<sup>41</sup>

The intertextual dynamic that appears operative in vv. 8-9 comprises of a recitation in the form of a summary of a text that is made up of different episodes (Robbins 1996b, 43). In this instance the summarised text is the Genesis creation account (Genesis 2-3),<sup>42</sup> which Paul condenses in 1 Cor. 11:8-9 by merging three fundamental characteristics from the Genesis narrative into the discourse of vv. 8-9.<sup>43</sup> According to Wire (1990b, 119) and Witherington (1992, 195) the implementation of texts from the Genesis narrative was a commonplace practice among Jewish textual practitioners. As Wire (1990b, 119) notes, “In this tradition, the dominant motif is the glorious figure of Adam made in God’s image to rule the earth as God does the heavens”. The hierarchical gendered summary may be delineated in the following manner.<sup>44</sup> Firstly, woman (Eve) was created from man (Adam) (Genesis 2:18-24),<sup>45</sup> and is therefore secondary and inferior to man. Secondly, man was not created for woman, but woman for man (Genesis 2:18-24).

As I have shown elsewhere (Jodamus 2005, 60) the oral-scribal intertexture of 1 Timothy 2:13-15 picks up on the same intertextual strategy that is also evident in 1 Corinthians 11:8-9. There are, however, two distinct differences that appear in the recitation

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as oral-scribal intertexture whereby the writer of 1 Timothy uses 1 Corinthians as an intertextual partner so as to support his assertions in that text. For further discussion see Jodamus (2005, 58–61).

<sup>40</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996a, 103).

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996a, 103–106; 1996b, 41–43). In Robbins (1996a, 103–106) only six types of recitation are described. This is indicative of the progressive nature of SRI as a research analytics.

<sup>42</sup>Cf. Conzelmann (1975, 182); Fee (1987, 504); Wire (1990b, 117–121, 123–127). See further Wire (1990b, 121, 125) and her articulation of further oral-scribal recitations possibly taken from Genesis 6:1–6; and 1 Enoch 6–16. She also goes on to demonstrate a possible interconnection with Galatians 3:27–28; 1 Corinthians 12:12–23; and Colossians 3:9–11 (Wire 1990b, 123–127).

<sup>43</sup>Cf. Jodamus (2005, 59). Using the language of SRI this would be considered a “argument from ancient testimony” and functions to embellish the rationale (Robbins 1996b, 57). Furthermore, the rationale that appears in 1 Corinthians 11:8–9 closely mimics that of the rationale that is articulated in 1 Timothy 2:13, and scholars generally regard these two passages to be the equivalent of each other. See Kelly (1983, 68); Johnson (2001, 208). Cf. Jodamus (2005, 59, n. 27).

<sup>44</sup>Wire (1990b, 117) calls this a “hierarchy of authority”.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Wire (1990b, 119).

of the Genesis narrative in 1 Tim. 2:13-15. In the first place, only certain sections of the Genesis creation narrative have been recited by Paul and in noticeably different words in comparison to its original source (Genesis 2:18-24 and Genesis 3:13, 16a). And secondly, Paul fails to place the Genesis narrative within its proper context, which comprises Genesis 1-3 and not merely Genesis 2-3, and thus deliberately withholds mentioning crucial parts of the narrative that might lead to a different rhetorical picture if included.<sup>46</sup> The result is a selective presentation of the Genesis narrative that seems to be overtly pessimistic toward Eve (Jodamus 2005, 60).

Similarly Wire (1990b, 119) asserts, “In fact Paul replaces the biblical narrative of God creating according to God’s image with a description of the male as God’s image and glory”. The summarised version of the creation narrative depicted in 1 Cor.11:8-9 is ostensibly one that favours the customary gendered hierarchies of the ancient Mediterranean and its hegemonic gendered system(s). Given the dominant culture’s preponderance for gender asymmetries that favour masculinity(ies) and positions men at the apex of it’s gendered structures, this type of summary by Paul in favour of Adam (and representationally also masculinity) hardly seems antagonistic to normative gendered reasoning and cultural parlance. As I have argued (Jodamus 2005, 60), “It appears this way, firstly in its predilection toward Adam, especially in its depiction of him and . . . by being overtly misogynistic towards Eve”. This is not strange, however, given the predilection that Paul displays in his rhetoric to construct and represent masculinity(ies) as superordinate to femininity(ies).

In 1 Cor. 11:8-9, Paul, therefore, configures a somewhat imprecise representation of the Genesis creation narrative which strategically also supports his instructions regarding women in vv. 10-16. Femininity(ies) in accordance to this rhetographical scenario is once again represented in accordance with the dominant notions of ideal femininity(ies) from the ancient environment. In so doing women are subordinated to function according to the delimitations of the broader social and cultural gendered framework. In his oral-scribal

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<sup>46</sup>Cf. Genesis 1:26-27. For further discussion see Gritz (1991, 137–138).

reconfiguration of the Genesis creation narrative Paul takes snap shots from the narrative in Genesis 2-3 in order to validate his assertions concerning women in vv. 9-10 and particularly vv. 13-16 with Scriptural authentication.<sup>47</sup> This assumes, however, that his audience were acquainted with the Genesis narrative and recognised it as authoritative. By his recitation or summary (vv. 8-9) of the Genesis creation narrative he then progresses further and strengthens his assertions (vv. 3-5, 13), by implying that Scripture (Genesis 2-3) makes clear and verifies the subordination and marginalisation of women in the public worship setting of the church (vv. 3-16), and also implicitly in the home (14:35).

In vv. 11-13 Paul seems to advocate some sort of gendered complementarity where women and men are not independent of one another which is similar to what he does in 1 Cor. 7:1-6. Possibly he does so as an ideological strategy that may imply a form of “unification” (Thompson 1990, 64). This postulation should not be taken to imply egalitarianism, however, but rather a form of gendered role distinction as vv. 13 immediately puts women back into their gendered place, given the dominant prescriptive gendered understandings from that epoch. As Wire (1990b, 128) argues in relation to vv. 11-12, “This is an appeal to justice or equivalence in sexual roles. But it concedes less than appears. The interdependence is based on sexual differentiation”. In so doing, the text once again merely locates women firmly in their sexually predisposed role and function as child bearer and subordinate householder under the guise of interdependence in the Lord.

Another suggestion for this notion of unification may be as part of an ideological strategy by Paul as the subordination articulated in the previous verses causing fragmentation may otherwise have gone too far leading to the question of why women would be involved in the church if there were no benefit for them.<sup>48</sup> But even so the terms of the benefit are not particularly favourable to women as it seems that women were placed in a subordinate position to men in the Christian community at Corinth.

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<sup>47</sup>Cf. Jodamus (2005, 61).

<sup>48</sup>For further articulation of this ideological strategy and others see chapter six of this thesis.



## Conclusion

From the discussion of this chapter, it seems evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians is culturally embedded within the patriarchal milieu of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. I have demonstrated that the rhetorical arguments used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians replicate and re-inscribe some of the main gendered ideologies and assertions of the ancient Mediterranean culture from around the period of the first and second century. Further this chapter has shown, particularly in the section dealing with the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies), and the use of the mother-infant metaphors in 1 Cor. 3:1-4 that given the environment of the dominant ancient gender system(s), it seems reasonable, if not natural, to imagine that this text would cause its readers to question Paul's (un)masculinity. The net result of this articulation, however, only serves to re-inscribe hegemonic femininity(ies) and normative gendered structurings typical of the household system and the hegemonic gendered logics from the broader society.

Cultural intertexture has demonstrated that Paul co-opts normative cultural aspects from the "secular" Graeco-Roman society of the day and transposes them in different ways for the Christian community at Corinth. In so doing the normative constructions and representations of ideal femininity(ies) are transposed into the Christian community as an expected and legitimate Christian gendered normativity. It seems apparent, therefore, that the rhetorical arguments used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians are constructed upon and reveals noticeable signs from the hegemonic gendered system(s) of the Graeco-Roman world. These implicit signs may be seen in the shape of standard patriarchal and androcentric cultural values and commonplace cultural *topoi* which were used by Paul to construct and represent a depiction of femininity(ies) that ultimately mimicked the hegemonic gendered structurings of his epoch.

The result of this rhetorical configuration in his discourse in 1 Corinthians leads to the restriction of women in the congregation to function in accordance with their mundane and highly valued (positive shame) cultural role as subordinate householder. This cultural normality is further concretised in the text by the use of oral-scribal intertexture. Paul interprets the Genesis narrative in such a way as to use its authoritative voice to confirm the

normative gendered values of his own Graeco-Roman culture. This implies that Paul accepts those patriarchal cultural norms and values, which then lead him to re-inscribe them into the Christian community, calling on men and women to adhere to those culturally rooted directives.

In the following chapter I move my investigation of the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians toward an analysis of how ideology and power intersect in the making of gendered normativities in Paul's discourse. I will do this with the assistance of ideological texture as delineated by SRI and its proponents, and in particular I will construct my analysis of ideological texture upon the advancements to the understanding of this texture as developed by Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b; 2006). By employing a gender-critical framework as a key analytical tool, I wish to support my investigation and to further enhance my ideological analysis of 1 Corinthians without which important gendered scripts would be missed.

## **Chapter 6:**

### **Gender and Ideology in 1 Corinthians.**

#### **Introduction.**

As mentioned in chapter one of this thesis Castells (2010, 7) argues that the construction of identity utilises properties that include among others “power apparatuses”. He maintains that the person “who constructs collective identity, and for what [purpose], largely determines the symbolic content of this identity, and its meaning for those identifying with it or placing themselves outside of it” (Castells 2010, 7). In this chapter I will argue that Paul’s rhetoric in 1 Corinthians operates in a similar manner to this postulation and is steeped with ideology. Also what will become apparent is that the collective identity constructed by Paul for the Corinthian community in the discourse of 1 Corinthians is primarily portrayed as masculine identity which has a direct impact upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the text. Gender is almost always ideological in character as gendered relations are used to legitimate dominance, particularly of women by men. The ancient Mediterranean gendered context is no different in this regard, and the importance of ideology to gender is well captured in what Braun (2003, 318) calls the “ideology of androcentrism”.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, as has been seen in chapter three of this thesis, the ancient Mediterranean sex-gender system was founded upon a kyriarchal and androcentric gendered ideology that maintained notions of “ideal” masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies). In this chapter I move my investigation of 1 Corinthians toward an analysis of “power struggles” in an attempt to examine the ideology within Paul’s rhetoric and to investigate how Paul’s rhetoric functions ideologically to assert his power over the Corinthian Christian community. I will do this firstly with the aid of ideological texture as delineated by SRI and its proponents, and in particular I will construct my

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. MacDonald (1988, 285).

ideological, textural analysis upon the advancements to this texture as developed by Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b; 2006).<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, I will incorporate a gender-critical framework as a key analytical tool, a “thinking technology”,<sup>3</sup> to further enhance my ideological analysis of 1 Corinthians without which important gendered echoes would be missed. In order to achieve my aims in this chapter I have divided my discussion into three interrelated main sub-sections, each serving a specific purpose. First, I will attempt to give a brief overview of the understanding of ideology as presented by SRI and its proponents.<sup>4</sup> This will serve as a means to evaluate the notion of ideological texture from a sociorhetorical perspective, as well as to support further developments to this texture that have a direct bearing upon my analysis. Second, I will elucidate the understanding of ideology as implemented in this chapter. This is critical to my analysis, as it supplies the theoretical backbone upon which to construct my investigation of the ideological nature of the discourse in 1 Corinthians. Third, I will then use this understanding of ideology, to engage in a textually based ideological investigation of 1 Corinthians in an attempt to demonstrate that the power of the text’s rhetoric results from its ideological nature, or what Robbins (1996a, 36-40, 192-236; 1996b, 95-119) calls its ideological texture.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Because a full analysis of all of the ideological strategies involved in 1 Corinthians would go considerably beyond the spatial limits set for this study, I have concentrated on those texts that I have investigated in chapters four and five of this thesis and that I believe are pertinent to my purpose in this thesis. For further discussion of the ideological strategies employed in 1 Corinthians 1-4 see Wanamaker (2003a, 213).

<sup>3</sup>See Lyke (2011, 207-220) for further explication.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996a; 1996b; 2002b; 2004b); Bloomquist (2003); Kloppenborg (2003).

<sup>5</sup>I am greatly indebted to the work of Wanamaker (2003a, 194-221; 2003b, 115-137; 2006, 339-364) in the construction of this chapter and the basic structure of this chapter attests to this fact as I pattern my discussion after the structure and insights observed from his erudite discussions of ideology.

# 1. Sociorhetorical Interpretation and Ideological Texture.

At the end of the twentieth century there was a widespread shift to ideological analysis in biblical studies circles, and the inclusion of ideological analysis as a vital element of sociorhetorical analysis by Robbins illustrates this shift.<sup>6</sup> In 1990 the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) began a discussion on “Ideological Criticism of Biblical Texts” (Bloomquist 2003, 166). Subsequently there has been a proliferation of discussions on ideology, but the term ideology itself connotes a variety of different meanings and may be used in a number of differing ways with variegated interpretive conclusions (Robbins 1996a, 200-220; 1996b, 106-115; Bloomquist 2003, 166).<sup>7</sup> Bloomquist (2003, 167) summarises three prominent approaches to understanding ideology as follows:

(1) an approach to ideology that sees it a priori as a negative veiling of reality over against a rigorous, scientific approach to reality (generally associated with the view of ideology proposed by Karl Marx and subsequent generations of Marxist analysts and liberationists); (2) an approach to ideology that sees it as a necessary, positive approach to reality without which one returns to a kind of epistemological naivete (associated with the hermeneutical analysis of Paul Ricoeur and H. G. Gadamer);<sup>8</sup> and (3) an approach to ideology that sees it as a reflection of values that are held to in particular contexts for a variety of reasons and which thus seeks simply to be descriptive of the values and the rationales of cultures (associated with the work of Clifford Geertz and subsequent generations of cultural anthropologists and ethnographers).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>As Robbins (1996a, 194) mentions, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1988, 15; 1989, 12) had for years stressed the fact that interpreters ought to examine the “ideological script” of a text. Not long after, Castelli (1991a) stressed the importance of evaluating Paul’s rhetoric as a discourse of power. Robbins builds further in a sociorhetorical manner on the work of Schüssler Fiorenza and Castelli and calls on interpreters to exhibit the ideological texture of texts rather than simply perpetuate its ideology (Robbins 1996a, 222).

<sup>7</sup>Wanamaker (2003a, 195; 2003b, 116) also notes the variegated meanings that the expression “ideology” connotes.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Gadamer (1977) ; Ricoeur (1986).

<sup>9</sup>Geertz (1973).

Robbins (1996a, 24-27; 1996b, 95) understands ideological analysis as a strategic process involving both the interpreter who analyses herself/himself as a reader and writer of the texts as well as the text itself as an ideological construction.<sup>10</sup> This means that while there is a particular focus on ideology as a specific texture in SRI, ideological texture, because of its nature, is also implicitly interwoven in the composition and analysis of inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture and sacred texture. In fact Robbins (2002b, 49) asserts that while ideological texture features as a fourth texture in the sequence of analysis, it does not suggest that the other textures are free from an ideological orientation.

Moreover, Robbins (1996b, 1) explains that, while sociorhetorical interpretation invites detailed attention to the text itself, it also moves in interactive ways into the world of the people who wrote the text and into the contemporary world. Scholars familiar with theories of ideology have often noted the multiplicity and complexities of ideological theorising (Wanamaker 2003a, 195).<sup>11</sup> Relying on Eagleton (1991) to compile his definition, Robbins (1996a, 36) defines ideology as “the ways in which what we say and believe connect with the power-structure and power-relations of the society we live in . . . those modes of feeling, valuing, perceiving and believing which have some kind of relation to the maintenance and reproduction of social power”.<sup>12</sup> In clarification of the definition by Eagleton, Robbins (1996a, 36) further adds, “Ideology concerns the particular ways in which our speech and action, in their social and cultural location, relate to and interconnect with resources, structures and institutions of power”. Using Eagleton (1991, 223), Robbins (1996a, 110) states that the term “ideology” symbolises the  
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<sup>10</sup>Bloomquist (1997, 202) concurs that ideological texture has to do with the biases be it positive or negative, of the interpreter her/himself. He mentions further that ideological texture concerns the “opinions, preferences, and stereotypes of a particular writer and a particular reader” (Bloomquist 1999, 188). Cf. Pillay (2008, 36); Bird (2011, 178).

<sup>11</sup>For a useful collection of primary texts showing the range and diversity of thought on the theory of ideology see Eagleton (1991; 1994).

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Eagleton (1983, 14-5). Wanamaker (2003a, 196) notes that Robbins (1996a, 36) in compiling this definition has used two different, but clearly related definitions of ideology and brought them together. According to Wanamaker (2003a, 196) the second definition originates in the expression beginning “those modes of feeling . . .” and offers an important strengthening of the significance of the first definition. (The ellipsis in the quotation is from Robbins).

points where power makes a direct impact upon certain utterances and engraves itself within them.

According to the description of ideology as asserted by Robbins (1996a, 36-37), the ideological texture of a text occurs within the text between the area of implied reader and narrator and characters. It should be observed, however, that this articulation of ideological texture is most suited to a narrative text rather than an epistolary text and in fact is discussed in that context in Robbins (1996a, 36-37). In the case of narrative texts Robbins (1996a; 1996b) sees the ideology in a text emerging from the reciprocity which occurs between the empowering of the narrator and characters, the verbal signs which constitute the text and the world represented in the text by the implied author and the implied reader. Ideology from this vantage point concerns itself with the way in which the narrator and characters represent the message and the way in which the implied reader and real reader/audience obtain it.

Robbins (1996a, 37) mentions further that the ideology of the text itself derives from the “reciprocity between meanings and meaning effects of the text in its world and meanings and meaning effects in the world of the real reader”. In this case, now the focus is on the arena of the text where the implied reader and the real reader/audience receive and empower the message of the text (Robbins 1996a, 37). Wanamaker (2003a, 196) has observed cases in Paul’s letters where very little or no direct narrative is present and where Paul himself is the narrator, as is the case of epistolary texts. In light of this, he has further advanced this trajectory of sociorhetorical investigation, noting that non-narrative texts may imply a narrative that lies beneath the discourse.<sup>13</sup>

At present, the range of ideology for SRI moves beyond the ideology contained in a text itself to include three other subsets, namely, the ideology in “authoritative traditions of interpretation”; “in intellectual discourse”; and “in individuals and groups” who interpret scriptural texts (Robbins 1996a, 193).<sup>14</sup> The main aspects for the scrutiny of ideological texture,

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<sup>13</sup>Wanamaker (2003a, 196) demonstrates this in relation to 2 Corinthians 10-13. Petersen (1985) indicated how an argumentative text, such as Philemon could be analysed by recourse to the implied story of the text, albeit then at the earlier stages of reception criticism.

<sup>14</sup>Also see Robbins (1996a, 221), but see the whole of chapter six for further discussion.

from a sociorhetorical vantage point, are the “biases, opinions, preferences, and stereotypes of a particular writer and a particular reader” (Robbins 1996b, 95). SRI has outlined three ways to investigate the ideological texture of a text, namely, “analyzing the social and cultural location of the implied author of the text; analyzing the ideology of power in the discourse of the text; and analyzing the ideology in the mode of intellectual discourse both in the text and in the interpretation of the text” (Robbins 1996b, 111).<sup>15</sup>

As a means to accomplish an ideological, textural analysis of a text, Robbins (1996a, 195) employs what he terms, five principles “for analyzing power relations in a text”. He has adopted these from Castelli (1991a, 49-50) who in turn has taken them from Foucault (1982, 223-224; 1991, 50, 121).<sup>16</sup> The summarised “principles” as delineated by Castelli (1991a, 50) are as follows:

- (1) One must be able to define the *system of differentiations* which allows the person or group in the dominant position in the hierarchical relationship to act upon the actions of the person or group in the subordinate position. In other words, there must be an underlying ideology of difference which creates “self” and “other” in the relationship, along with all the other oppositions that enable the social system to function.
- (2) The *types of objectives* held by those who act upon the actions of others must be articulated. One might use here the language of desire and characterize power relations as a series of conflicting desires, borne out through struggle.
- (3) There must be an identifiable *means* for bringing these relationships into being. Social structures and networks provide the possibility for desires to meet and conflict, and for the agents within power relations to engage one another.

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<sup>15</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996b, 95-119).

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Robbins (1996a, 195). Wanamaker (2003a, 197) observes that “a comparison of Castelli’s five points (she does not call them principles as Robbins (1996a, 195) does) with their original presentation by Foucault suggests that she has provided a very helpful interpretation of Foucault that is much more accessible as an analytical tool than was the case in their original form”.



(4) The fourth essential feature of an analysis of power relations is the identification of the *forms of institutionalization* of power. Power circulates within social networks, but passes through structures where it is concentrated, defined, and deployed: these structures are social institutions. Foucault has analyzed institutions such as prisons and hospitals, and for the study of the New Testament, the institution is the *ekklesia*, the church. While it has been established that no unified institution called *ekklesia* yet existed, the image of a unified institution is present as an emerging and singular *ideal* in New Testament texts.

(5) The final point to be analyzed in relation to power relations is *the degree of rationalization* of power relations. The processes by which power relations are rendered obvious and natural are crucially important to an analysis of power. It is here more than anywhere else that the relationship between power and knowledge is foregrounded, as power relations are rationalized discursively as representing a larger truth.

Remarking on the above principles and the implementation of it by Robbins (1996a; 1996b), Wanamaker (2003a, 197) states that these principles, may more suitably be referred to as “processes of analysis”. In addition to this he states that while they are useful in comprehending the power dynamics of a text, they are not the same as actually investigating the implicit ideology of a text and neither do they serve to elucidate the manner in which ideology operates (Wanamaker 2003a, 197).<sup>17</sup> It is because of this distinction and at this crucial point that he recommends the insights of Thompson (1990; 1984) be considered in order to sharpen “our understanding and practice of ideological criticism” (Wanamaker 2003a, 197-198).<sup>18</sup> The advancements to analysing ideology by Wanamker (2003a, 197-198) has been useful to elucidate

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<sup>17</sup>Similarly also see Bloomquist (2003, 172) who mentions that what is needed in an investigation of ideology is a means by which an interpreter may seek to explore ideology as a rhetorical process as evidenced in texts. He mentions further that scholars participating in the “Religious Rhetoric of Antiquity commentary series” have started along this trajectory of late (Bloomquist 2003, 174).

<sup>18</sup>Thompson has written two major studies on ideology. The first, entitled, *Studies in the Theory of Ideology* (Thompson 1984), is a compilation of essays which he wrote in the early 1980s. The second study, *Ideology and Modern Culture*. (Thompson 1990), is a monograph in which he develops a critical theory of ideology. Wanamaker (2003a, 198) mentions that even a cursory reading of the work of Thompson reveals many parallels to SRI as developed by Robbins and others. The insights from Thompson (1990) will be discussed in the next sub-section of this chapter.

the actual ideology of a text and the modes in which ideology functions. He does not, however, consider the implicit gendered nuances of ideology and ideology critique. It is at this time that a gender-critical thinking strategy becomes important in taking ideological, textural analysis a step further. The following section of this chapter will clarify the new development of ideological, textural analysis as developed by Wanamaker (2003a), as well as introduce a gender-critical framework to the discussion of ideology.

## **2. A New Development of Ideological Texture for SRI and a Gendered Trajectory <sup>19</sup>.**

Observing clear similarities between SRI and the alternative conceptualisation of ideology suggested by Thompson (1990, 52-73), Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b) has added to the research of ideological texture for SRI. In doing this he has demonstrated the efficacy of researching biblical texts from a sociorhetorical perspective with the use of ideological texture in combination with insights from Thompson (1990).<sup>20</sup> As Thompson (1990, 7) puts it,

Ideology can be used to refer to the ways in which meaning serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical -- what I [John Thompson] shall call 'relations of domination'. Ideology, broadly speaking is *meaning in the service of power*.

Wanamaker (2003a, 200), commenting on this, asserts: "In my view this is a useful sharpening of the definition of ideology adopted by Robbins because it makes explicit the way in which discourses and actions, which carry symbolic meaning, function ideologically to mobilize power in order to either create or maintain domination".<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>This particular section of the thesis is an adapted version of chapter six of my master's thesis which was submitted in September of 2005. For further discussion see Jodamus (2005, 75-87).

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Komoravalli (2007, 7-9, 35, 35) for a discussion that investigates ideological texture using SRI and Thompson's notions of ideology and power to investigate 1 Corinthians 3-4.

<sup>21</sup>Wanamaker (2003b, 117) notes that the implementation of an understanding of ideology as posited by Thompson to analyse the ways in which Paul's rhetoric functions to re-establish and maintain his relationship of author-

I base my discussion of the ideological texture of 1 Corinthians upon this new development. According to Thompson (1990, 53) theories of ideology may be separated into two broad “types” of ideological conceptions, namely, “neutral conceptions” and “critical conceptions”.<sup>22</sup> Neutral conceptions are those which claim to portray phenomena as ideology or ideological without suggesting that these phenomena are necessarily deceptive, erroneous or allied to the interests of any specific group (Thompson 1990, 53). According to this, any human interactions, irrespective of its particular aims may be encompassed by ideology (Thompson 1990, 53).

Critical conceptions of ideology, on the other hand, “convey a negative, critical or pejorative sense” implying that ideology or ideological phenomena are “misleading, illusory, or one-sided” in supporting the interests of a particular group over against other groups (Thompson 1990, 53-54). Thompson (1990, 55) notes that most contemporary authors who write on ideology implement a neutral conception of ideology. In this way, ideology is perceived in a generalised manner, “as systems of beliefs or symbolic forms and practices” (Thompson 1990, 55).

In his study on ideology Thompson (1990, 55) develops what he terms an “alternative approach” to understanding and analysing ideology by his expression of a critical conception of ideology designed towards the inquiry of socio-historic phenomena. In maintaining one facet of negativity, namely, the maintenance of domination, he preserves the stance adopted by the critical tradition of ideology (Thompson 1990, 55-56; Wanamaker 2003a, 195; Wanamaker 2003b, 117). Wanamaker (2003a, 196) places the definition of ideology as developed by Robbins (1996a; 1996b) in line with the critical tradition of ideology since “the maintenance and reproduction of social power” inevitably lies in the interests of some but not others within a group or society.<sup>23</sup>

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ity and domination over the Corinthian converts does not necessitate the deliberate deception of the Corinthian community by Paul in his attempts to sustain his power to shape the community as its founder.

<sup>22</sup>Also see Wanamaker (2003b, 116-117). This distinction is widely recognised; see, for example Barrett (1991, 18-24). According to Wanamaker (2003a, 195; 2003b, 116), Eagleton (1991, 15) in his analysis of ideology preserves the notion that the term ideology can be employed in a pejorative way, a positive way, or a neutral way, but he fails to construct clear criteria for investigating these differences.

<sup>23</sup>See Robbins (1996a, 223-224) where he argues that the discourse of 1 Corinthians is directed to creating and empowering a Pauline faction within the church at Corinth that would give Paul final authority in the governance of the community. As Wanamaker (2003a, 196) asserts, this impression is strongly confirmed by his (Robbins)

Wanamaker (2003a, 198) argues that because ideology itself is about power according to Robbins (1996a; 1996b), Eagleton (1991), and Thompson (1990), it is vital first to have a sufficient description of power in mind prior to defining the notion of ideology.<sup>24</sup> Thompson (1990, 151) defines power along a spectrum made up of two primary aspects. First, power as a general capacity may be regarded as “the ability to act in pursuit of one’s aims and interests” (Thompson 1990, 151). This is contingent on one’s place within a particular domain of activity or a particular institution. This latter focus comprises the second primary aspect of power and may be defined as “a capacity which *enables* or *empowers* some individuals to make decisions, pursue ends or realize interests; it empowers them in such a way that, without the capacity endowed by their position within a field or institution, they would not have been able to carry out the relevant course (Thompson 1990, 151).

Closely related to power, domination takes place from asymmetrical power relations (Thompson 1990, 151; Wanamaker 2003a, 199). Such “systematically asymmetrical” power relations come into being when certain individuals or groups of people are given or seize power in a way that prohibits and remains inaccessible to other individuals or groups of people, in spite of the origin upon which such exclusion is premised (Thompson 1984, 130; Thompson 1990, 151). Returning to Thompson (1990, 56) and his understanding of ideology as “*the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination*”,<sup>25</sup> it may be observed that his focus is on the ways that meaning is employed by hegemonic individuals and groups to set up and preserve social relations from which they profit to the detriment of other individuals and groups (Thompson 1990, 73).

From a gender-critical vantage point it does seem, however, that relations of domination are also served by the institutionalisation of gendered ideology. In this way gender as ideology is

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own analysis of the ideological texture of 1 Corinthians 9. But Robbins (1996a, 223-224) also notes that ideology can be illusory, when, for instance, researchers do not interpret the ideology of a text such as 1 Corinthians 9 and merely re-establish its ideology unknowingly.

<sup>24</sup>For a more in depth discussion of the works of Thompson and further discussion pertaining to the notion of power and how the notion of power as described by Thompson (1990; 1984) corresponds to various points of the Castelli/Robbins procedures for “analyzing power relations in a text”, see Wanamaker (2003a, 198-200).

<sup>25</sup>The emphasis is his. Elsewhere he mentions that the concept of ideology itself “refers to the ways in which meaning serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain relations of power which are systematically asymmetrical” (Thompson 1990, 7).

not only utilised by hegemonic individuals but also hegemonic systems. These systems serve to establish asymmetrical social relationships by which men benefit over women. The ancient Graeco-Roman context, for example, was premised upon the ideology of androcentrism and kyriarchy. As Schüssler Fiorenza, in reference to the neologism kyriarchy, notes, it allows “us to investigate the multiplicative interdependence of gender, race, and class stratifications as well as their discursive inscriptions and ideological reproductions” (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001:119). Keeping in mind this neologism from chapter one of this thesis, it becomes relevant to once again pick up on this term in order to demonstrate that domination takes place as “a complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social structures of superordination and subordination, of ruling and oppression” (Schüssler Fiorenza 2001:118).

Thompson (1990, 53) argues that “symbolic forms” creates meanings and meanings effects. According to Thompson (1990, 59) this comprises a variety of actions and expressions; images and texts; linguistic expressions (verbal or textual) and non-linguistic or quasi-linguistic expressions such as visual images or constructions that merge images and words. He further clarifies that “[i]deological phenomena are meaningful symbolic phenomena” when they continue, particularly with regard to socio-historic conditions, to institute and maintain “relations of domination” (Thompson 1990, 56). This latter aspect comprises the one “criterion of negativity” that he maintains in his definition of ideology (Thompson 1990, 56). The differentiation, however, with his definition and that of the critical tradition, is that he distinguishes his conceptualisation from the “supposition of error and illusion” (Thompson 1990, 67).<sup>26</sup> In this way his definition does not endeavour to abandon the negative sense linked to the term ideology, but rather, safeguards it while comprehending it in a different way that fashions a critical ideological concept (Thompson 1990, 73).

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<sup>26</sup>Thompson (1990, 67) in this regard remains in the critical tradition of ideology, but rejects the idea that by definition ideologies are necessarily erroneous or illusory, though they certainly may be. Wanamaker (2003b, 117) notes, “[b]y limiting the negativity to this it allows him to overcome the epistemological burden that ideological phenomena must of necessity be erroneous, illusory, or in some other respect flawed before they can be ideological, and it allows him to focus on the ways in which symbolic forms serve in certain circumstances ‘to establish and sustain relations of domination’”. For further discussion and a fuller development of the themes in this paragraph see Thompson (1990, 52-60).

What the above delineation of Thompson (1990, 59) fails to take account of, however, is that these “symbolic forms” are highly gendered representations and serve to construct gendered identities and normativities.<sup>27</sup> In light of chapter three of this thesis gender may be construed as a basis upon which domination functions and is a central means through which asymmetrical power relations operate. As Scott (1999, 48) notes, “[G]ender is the primary way of signifying relations of power”. Gender as a tool to extrapolate key nuances of ideology seems, therefore, to be a key mechanism that is lacking from the articulations of ideology by both Thompson (1990) and Wanamaker (2003b, 115-137). They do not address the fact that power affects people kyriarchally and cuts across various social factors, such as gender, sex, religion, race and ethnicity. Intersectionality theory, is a helpful tool in this regard as it demonstrates the complexities of power mechanisms and its impact upon different people. For this reason I intend to bring intersectionality theory into this discussion in order to offer a gendered trajectory to ideological inquiry.

Crenshaw (2011:25–42) first coined the term intersectionality within the context of critical legal studies. She used the theory for the specific interrogation of the plight and exclusion of “black women” whose “identity fixedness” as simultaneously black and women disqualified them from legal remedies. Since then this expression has been adapted and may also be viewed as a critical analytical tool or a “thinking technology” (Lykke 2011, 207-220). Implemented in this manner, intersectionality subverts any binary notion of domination and zooms in on the multiplicity and interdependence of social factors that participate in creating and sustaining power relations that function as discourses in the making of normativities, identities and social relations (Yuval-Davis 2011:155–169, 159, n.2; Crenshaw 2011:221–233).

Thompson (1990, 60) suggests five basic modes in which ideology functions. They are: “‘legitimation’, ‘dissimulation’, ‘unification’, ‘fragmentation’, and ‘reification’”.<sup>28</sup> Each mode

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<sup>27</sup>See chapter one of this thesis for further discussion of this.

<sup>28</sup>For further delineation of these ideological modes of operation and their respective strategies by which they are expressed see Thompson (1990, 61-67). Also see Wanamaker (2003a, 194-221; 2003b, 115-137) for a helpful sociorhetorical analysis of 2 Corinthians 10-13 and 1 Corinthians 1-4, using these ideological modes and their respective strategies of construction.

can be associated with a number of “strategies of symbolic construction” (Thompson 1990, 60).<sup>29</sup> For example, legitimization, one of the most widely known modes by which ideology functions, may occur through rationalisation. In this way a set of interconnected reasons are constructed to validate or support social institutions or social relations. Or it may function through universalisation in which institutional aspects which serve the personal interests of a few are depicted as serving the interests of all (Thompson 1990, 61). Another example is the ideological strategy of dissimulation through the use of certain metaphors. According to Thompson (1990, 63), metaphors can “dissimulate social relations by representing them, or the individuals and groups embedded in them, as endowed with characteristics which they do not literally possess, thereby accentuating certain features at the expense of others and charging them with a positive or negative sense”.

In conceptualising these five modes, he does make further clarifications, three of which seem important for my investigative interests. First, he clarifies that these five modes are not the only ways in which ideology functions. Second, these five modes do not necessarily constantly function autonomously from each other, but in fact function concurrently. And third, certain strategies are “typically” though not exclusively associated with certain ideological modes (Thompson 1990, 60).<sup>30</sup>

In what follows I will attempt to demonstrate how Paul asserts his power to the Corinthian Christian community through the ideological means inherent in his discourse. I will do this by employing the critical conceptualisation of ideology as developed by Thompson (1990), and applied to SRI by Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b), together with a gender-critical stance to ideology.<sup>31</sup> Due to limitations of space I will not be able to discuss in detail the modes by which

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<sup>29</sup>For a useful table in which he matches the general modes by which ideology functions with typical strategies by which symbolic construction occurs see Thompson (1990, 60) .

<sup>30</sup>For further clarifications see Thompson (1990, 60-61).

<sup>31</sup>Wanamaker (2003a, 201) mentions that prior to investigating the ideology of the text, it is essential first to observe features of the rhetorical construction given that the ideology is rooted in the discourse of the text. At this juncture according to Wanamaker (2003a, 201) it becomes essential to recognise and examine the narrative of the text being mindful, however, that what we are observing is simply Paul’s version of the story. Others involved may undoubtedly have constructed different narratives to validate their views and actions just as Paul wanted to justify his. The control of a narrative is itself a type of power which can be used for ideological reasons as Thompson (1990, 61-62) and Wanamaker (2003a, 204) points out. For a discussion of the rhetorical situation or exigence of 1 Corinthians see chapter four of this thesis.

ideology functions or all of the strategies suggested by Thompson (1990, 61-67). In my analysis of 1 Corinthians I will, however, use many of the general modes by which ideology functions in the analysis of 1 Corinthians which follows, and I will demonstrate how a number of the strategies discussed by Thompson are rooted in Paul's discourse.<sup>32</sup>

### **3. A Gender-Critical Investigation of Ideology in 1 Corinthians.**

#### **3.1. Paul's Ideological Power and Authority**

Castelli (1991a, 123-124) has demonstrated that the only way for Paul to create and sustain his relationships of power and domination with his communities was the ideological deployment of rhetoric. She asserts, "After all, he [Paul] does not possess any special physical means to coerce people to relate to him in a certain way; and he has no state apparatus (police or military) to ensure compliance" (Castelli 1991a, 123).<sup>33</sup> According to her analysis Paul does not actively force people against their conscious wills to position themselves in a subordinate relationship to him or accept his demands. Rather, by the strategic and ideological use of rhetoric and personal authority, he attempts to persuade them to accept his authority and power.

Butler (1993) is illuminating in this regard. She argues for an understanding of power that operates through discursive practices and points to the construction of the subject as a product of power (Butler 1993, xii). She writes:

[I]f power orchestrates the formation and sustenance of subjects, then it cannot be accounted for in terms of the 'subject' which is its effect. And here it would be no more right to claim that the term 'construction' belongs at the grammatical site of subject, for construction is neither a subject nor its act, *but a process of reiteration* by which both 'subjects' and 'acts' come to appear at all. *There is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power* in its persistence and instability (Butler 1993, xviii).<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>For a convenient table in which general modes by which ideology functions are connected with typical strategies by which symbolic construction takes place, see Thompson (1990, 60).

<sup>33</sup>My emphasis.

<sup>34</sup>My emphasis.



Ideological texture can benefit from taking account of discursive practices as the reiterative performance of power.<sup>35</sup> Such an understanding shifts the focus away from subjects as powerful, to discourse that construct them or their roles in hierarchies of sociality.

In this way Paul's discourse is seen to carry power only in its approximation. The measure that it is re-enacted or reiterated by the Corinthian community determines the level at which his discursive power will be solidified or rejected. Butler (1993, xxii) once again proves helpful here when she comments on the notion of regulatory schemas and mentions, "The force and necessity of these norms . . . is thus functionally *dependent on* the approximation and citation of the law; the law without its approximation is no law or, rather, it remains a governing law only for those who would affirm it". Similarly as Butler (1993, xxii) might say of Paul's authority, it is "repeatedly fortified and idealized" as authoritative "only to the extent that it is reiterated" as authoritative "by the very citations it is said to command". Commenting on the work of Castelli (1991a), Wanamaker (2003b, 115) states:

Although Castelli is aware that this is an ideological move [Paul's use of rhetoric in 1 Cor. 1:10-4:21 to rationalise and establish his position of power over the Corinthian community] and that ideological moves are the most powerful available to Paul for establishing and for that matter sustaining his relationships of power with the Corinthian Christians, she has not developed this point with any depth because she has not clearly defined what she means by ideology nor has she explored in any detail the relation between power, domination, and ideology.

The efficacy of these means, however, has to be assessed by the extent to which the Corinthian congregation employs and follows what Paul claims to be true and negates other competing claims to truth (Castelli 1991a, 123).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Cf. Robbins (2009:xxiii). He notes that an interpretive analytics views texts as discourse, and that discourse forms part of a bigger configuration of power, and action, and that this interrelatedness is constructed in various ways by various paradigms.

<sup>36</sup>Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000, 51).

Not only is the efficacy of Paul's discursive power directly related to the acceptance of that discourse by the Corinthian congregation, but in accepting his discourse as powerful and authoritative, his rhetoric becomes normative and normalising. As a result gendered normativities implicit in his rhetoric become cemented as social reality for the Corinthian community and anyone in a contemporary world setting who accepts Paul's discourse as power. Lopez (2012, 101) states it this way, "[W]ords and images are not mere reflections but rather constructions and naturalizations of human relationships. Images, like words . . . serve an ideological function by rendering the social relations and hierarchies they produce, and from which they are made, natural, inevitable, universal, and eternal".

Wanamaker (2003a, 209) mentions that Paul's missionary opponents "in Corinth had a very different understanding of themselves and of Paul that was plausible to at least some in the community, perhaps even a majority" and served the ideological function of de-legitimizing Paul in their eyes. The problem is that apart from 2 Corinthians, also a construction of Paul, we have no way of knowing how the Corinthians responded. In the case of 2 Corinthians 10-13 we may be able to have some idea of how Paul thinks the Corinthians reacted to his earlier letter. If we follow this rhetorical construction then the answer is that Paul did not convince/compel all of the Corinthians into an appropriate response with 1 Corinthians. Wanamaker (2003a, 209; 2003b, 136; 2006, 349) echoes this assertion and trajectory of analysis in his ideological textual investigations and argues that Paul's power and authority are contingent on them being recognised and acknowledged by the Corinthians. The primary means to accomplish this recognition in the conditions that ensued was through his rhetoric. He further clarifies this assertion by stating, "Apostolic apology is an ideological construction in the service of the very power which Paul claims to hold in reserve but in reality only has when the community acknowledges his power through its acceptance of his authority" (Wanamaker 2003a, 209, n. 47).

It seems that a similar rhetorical situation exists in the discourse of 1 Corinthians where Paul uses rhetoric in an attempt to persuade his Corinthian Christian audience to recognise and acknowledge his power and authority. But as has been pointed out, his discursive power and authority are contingent on the Corinthians' recognition and approximation of them. To the

extent that his rhetoric is successful,<sup>37</sup> it procures him the “right” to lay down prohibitions and instructions according to his will as he does in the discourse of the text. Feminist and postcolonial feminist biblical scholars such as Fiorenza (2007; 2009, 1-23), Dube (2000; 2004) and Kwok Pui-lan (2005; 2002) have demonstrated multiple and intersecting kyriarchal relations of power and domination within Paul’s letters. According to Marchal (2008, 84) this should indicate the “cross-gendered” and “cross-ethnic” nature of Paul’s writings. Because Paul’s letters are addressed to audiences comprising both women and men, Marchal (2008, 85) in relation to Philippians notes, “When Paul delivers these arguments for imitation and the development of a particular kind of ‘us’, he does so to women in the community, both named and unnamed” According to him this demonstrates a “concerted effort” on the part of Paul which “implies that these women are either not already imitating him or are doing so in an unexpected and unappreciated fashion (at least for Paul)” (Marchal 2008, 85). His concern, however, is to demonstrate the “cross-gendered” and “cross-ethnic argument for imitation within an imperially militarized zone” (Marchal 2008, 85–86). In what follows I will return to the “us” or collective identity constructed by Paul in 1 Corinthians.

In 1 Corinthians 1:1 and 1:7 the text attempts to establish Paul’s power to shape and direct the Corinthian community by claiming that he possesses divine authority from God (1:1) and Christ (1:17), as an apostle or agent of Jesus Christ. This serves to link Paul’s ministry to that of God’s purpose of universal salvation through the mediator Christ Jesus (8:6, 9:19-23, 15:1-2). As Wanamaker (2003a, 208) mentions in relation to 2 Cor. 10:8 and 13:10, “The choice of the absolute form, ὁ κύριος, reflects the fact that Paul’s claim to authority was derived from the ultimate authority figure for Christians, an authority figure whom the Corinthians must acknowledge if they were to remain Christians”. Similarly here in vv. 1 and 17 Paul’s claim to authority is from this same source and carries the same validation.

As will soon become clear, this claim to authority by Paul, empowers him to direct the community as he sees fit. According to Wanamaker (2003b, 119), Paul, due to his recognised

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<sup>37</sup>Mitchell (1991, 303) notes that it seems clear from 2 Corinthians that Paul’s rhetorical strategy failed, and “1 Corinthians was a failure in its original historical setting”. Cf. Mount (2005, 325); Wanamaker (2006, 353).

status as an apostle of Christ, had a claim to authority over the churches that he had founded which was firstly inaccessible to ordinary converts (1 Cor. 4:14-21, 1 Cor. 15:8-11) and secondly afforded him the right to decide on matters pertaining to the church communities which he founded.<sup>38</sup> This in itself is an ideological move as Thompson (1984, 130) notes:

Relations of power are ‘systematically asymmetrical’ when particular agents or groups of agents are institutionally endowed with power in a way which excludes, and to some significant degree remains inaccessible to other agents or groups of agents, irrespective of the basis upon which such exclusion is carried out.<sup>39</sup>

The implicit claim of divine commission to exercise power that is contained in the rhetoric of the text, instantly takes us to the ideological centre from which Paul’s power over the Corinthian community develops.<sup>40</sup> From the viewpoint of ideological analysis, as demonstrated by Thompson (1990, 52-73), it appears that Paul engages in the ideological mode of legitimation by making use of the ideological strategy of rationalisation in 1 Cor. 1:1 and 1:7. He does so, in order to persuade his Corinthian audience to recognise and acknowledge his power. According to Thompson (1990, 61) this strategy occurs when “the producer of a symbolic form constructs a chain of reasoning which seeks to defend or justify a set of social relations or institutions, and thereby to persuade an audience that it is worthy of support”.<sup>41</sup>

In the previously mentioned verses Paul makes a self-claim to delegated authority from God and Christ. He does this by linking his ministry to the Corinthians as an act of God’s will

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<sup>38</sup>As an example of this Wanamaker (2003b, 119, n. 22) notes 1 Cor. 5:1-5 where Paul instructs the community to expel a member whose action Paul regards to be morally outrageous.

<sup>39</sup>See also Thompson (1990, 151-152).

<sup>40</sup>This thought is taken from Wanamaker (2003a, 209) where he describes the ideology contained in the discourse of 2 Corinthians 10-13 with the analogy of an “ideological web” that Paul spins in his rhetoric.

<sup>41</sup>According to Eagleton (1991, 51-54) there is a predisposition among scholars to see rationalisations as being vulnerable since it masks the actual situation, often from the individual doing the rationalising, as well as from the perspective of the recipients of the rationalisation. Eagleton (1991, 51-54) rubbishes this negative suggestion as having widespread legitimacy. While it may be correct to posit that some rationalisations are deceptive, it is, however, inaccurate to infer that all rationalisations must be deceptive. Following Eagleton (1991, 51-54) and Wanamaker (2003a, 217, n. 74), I do not presume that Paul was purposefully participating in a misleading action through rationalisations. Cf. Given (2001, 95).

for universal salvation through his message of Christ Jesus (1:17, 8:6, 9:19-23, 15:1-2). This strategically places him in a privileged position as an agent of God to bring about salvation. His work as preacher and apostle authorised by Christ is an attempt to rationalise his authority and power over the Corinthians, but also over Timothy and Apollos, the other leaders at Corinth and the members of the Corinthian congregation themselves.<sup>42</sup> In the Christian hierarchy he stands one level below God and God's son, Jesus Christ. Since he did not appoint himself to this position, according to the rationalisation in his pronouncements, he must be respected by Timothy and Apollos and the Corinthians as ultimately coming from God. This is exactly what ideological legitimisation is about, namely, the establishment and sustaining of relations of domination as "legitimate, that is, as just and worthy of support" (Thompson 1990, 61).

From an ideological perspective, Paul's primary intention in 1 Cor. 1:1 and 1:7 is to promulgate his position of incontestable leadership in relation to the community, with its attendant power and authority to direct and control the community as God's agent in the way that he sees fit.<sup>43</sup> In and of itself this is a highly gendered configuration as it sets up Paul as the archetypal head of the Christian household at Corinth. In doing so Paul positions himself as the most dominant male and incontrovertibly also re-inscribes stereotypical notions of hegemonic masculinity(ies) from the Graeco-Roman empire.<sup>44</sup> Also in 1 Cor. 4:14-21 Paul makes explicit use of the father of a household as a metaphor for his position of power over the Corinthians and this is in itself an ideological move by Paul as it carries with it the most dominant role in the household structure in antiquity (Wanamaker 2003b, 135-136).<sup>45</sup>

Furthermore Wanamaker (2006, 350) has demonstrated that, because Paul's own authority had been questioned, the only way that he could expect to be heard and obeyed was if he

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<sup>42</sup>This asymmetrical leadership hierarchy will be further discussed in the paragraphs that ensue.

<sup>43</sup>Wanamaker (2003a) has demonstrated this fact in relation to 2 Corinthians 10-13.

<sup>44</sup>New Testament scholars have noted the complexity of Paul's identity situatedness and have called for caution when trying to analyse Paul in essentialistic terms as an agent for or subverter of the Roman Empire. As Punt (2011, 61) asserts, "[T]he challenge to situate Paul appropriately with regard to the Roman Empire—without discounting other elements of his first century context—is clearly important. We have seen how Paul's letters provide evidence of his ambivalence toward the discourse and setting of empire". The intersectional analytical tool of hybridity as well as mimicry becomes central at this stage and many New Testament scholars have applied this postcolonial optic to interpret the writings of Paul. Cf. Jervis (2011, 96, 108); Lopez (2011, 76-7, 89, 92); and Stanley (2011, 113).

<sup>45</sup>For further discussion of this, see chapter four of this thesis.

could display to his detractors somehow that he had a right to address and direct them. Paul, therefore, constructs an image of himself as one who has power due to his “spiritual wisdom and insight”, while claiming that this was of more significance than “the human wisdom and rhetorical sophistication of those who were so much admired by the community” (Wanamaker 2006, 350). In 1:18-2:1-5 and 4:19 this is exactly what Paul does by citing a powerful symbol, namely, God’s power through the wisdom of Christ and him crucified and the kingdom of God as a demonstration that Paul’s power does not rest on rhetorical sophistication.<sup>46</sup>

With this demonstration of rhetorical eloquence, while all the time denying that he had such eloquence as Given (2001) has demonstrated, Paul manages to legitimate and intensify his own authority (and masculine performativity) “by subtly suggesting that his power is derived from the divine sphere, not the human sphere, unlike those whom he threatens” (Wanamaker 2003b, 136). Then in 1 Cor. 3:17 Paul strengthens his position of authority by identifying those who oppose him as destroyers of the temple of God, that is, destroyers of the community (Wanamaker 2003b, 133). By this assertion Paul implies that any who are defiant towards him are in fact disobedient to Christ. Thus Paul obfuscates the nature of the opposition to him and the essence of his own apostleship by making his opponents enemies of God. This is clearly a de-legitimation strategy which is the opposite of the ideological move of legitimation and serves to bolster Paul’s own legitimacy.<sup>47</sup>

Castelli (1991a) in her analysis of ideology in 1 Corinthians discusses traditional interpretations and briefly shows how most interpreters do not analyse the ideological aspect of Paul’s discourse. The centre piece of her ideological analysis is 1 Cor. 1:10-4:21. She maintains that interpreters often spiritualise the text and in so doing they remove it from its socio-cultural and historical context, instead of investigating the text as persuasive rhetoric (Castelli 1991a, 24-  
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<sup>46</sup>See further Wanamaker (2003a, 219-220) and his discussion of the ideological strategy that is embedded in Paul’s argument that in Christ power comes from what is weak.

<sup>47</sup>This idea is taken from Wanamaker (2003a, 210) where he states this ideological strategy in relation to 2 Cor. 10:5-6.

32).<sup>48</sup> Castelli (1991a) relies heavily on the approach of Michel Foucault and his specific criterion of differentiations in sustaining power relations through discourse for her approach that is based on an analytics of power for investigating ideology.<sup>49</sup>

In this regard the term “discourse” refers to something more than mere representation: “It implies rhetoric cast in its broadest sense, of that which persuades and coerces, that which has a political motive – that is, a motive inscribed by power” (Castelli 1991a, 53).<sup>50</sup> In her analysis of ideology in 1 Corinthians Castelli (1991a) identifies the major rhetorical objective of the discourse to be the removal of dissension, quarrelling and discord through an ideology of sameness.<sup>51</sup> She fails to note, however, given the hegemonic discourse of the ancient Mediterranean gendered system(s),<sup>52</sup> that the removal of these characteristically feminine traits is also primarily a removal of femininity as these traits on a larger scale simultaneously represented “ideal” femininity.<sup>53</sup> This then turns out to be a strategic ideological move of dissimulation through displacement. According to Thompson (1990, 62),

Ideology *qua* dissimulation may be expressed in symbolic forms by means of a variety of different strategies. One such strategy is *displacement*: a term customarily used to refer to one object or individual is used to refer to another, and thereby the positive or negative connotations of the term are transferred to the other object or individual.

Witherington (1995, 145) maintains that Castelli (1991a) is incorrect in her assertion that Paul employs mimetic language and paternalistic ideology to make a coercive move to establish

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<sup>48</sup>For investigations that take seriously Pauline texts as persuasive rhetoric, see Given (2001, 93-98) and Penner and Vander Stichele (2005c, 214-237). Also see, Horsley (2000a, 74-82) who presents a survey of the function of rhetoric in the Greek cities of the Roman empire and displays the significance of rhetoric at this epoch.

<sup>49</sup>Castelli (1991a, 15) introduces the analyses of “regimes of truth” and “technologies of power” as developed by Michel Foucault as the interpretive lens with which to position her study.

<sup>50</sup>Also see Bloomquist (2003, 168).

<sup>51</sup>According to Burke (2003, 110) the preponderance of a notion of an ideology sameness by Castelli (1991a) is problematic “and if followed to its logical conclusion leaves us with Pauline churches lacking in initiative and so uniform they can only be described as clone-communities”.

<sup>52</sup>See chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>53</sup>For an understanding and further discussion of chaos and disorder as cosmologically representative of femininity, see Mitchell (1991, 104); Zeitlin (1995, 58-74; 1996); Økland (2004, 42-46).

himself at the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Corinth. According to Witherington (1995, 145) this is an unnecessary tactic and according to his analysis this argument does not stand as Paul believes that his role and status are established by God. For this reason 1 Corinthians 1-4 is not an *apologia* or an attempt to re-establish a lost authority. Given (2001, 94), who makes clear how many rhetorically intelligent interpretations of the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians have failed to notice Paul's "cunning" rhetoric,<sup>54</sup> rightfully has demonstrated that before Paul could try to restore unity through dealing with the variety of divisive activities at Corinth, he first had to re-establish his authority.<sup>55</sup> I will argue with Castelli (1991a, 116), Given (2001, 94-95), and Wanamaker (2003b, 115; 2006, 340, 350) among others,<sup>56</sup> that Paul first seeks to re-establish his authority in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 before turning to specific issues whose solution hinge on whether the Corinthians accept his instruction [not simply his advise as Mitchell (1991) asserts] as the founder and mediator of Christ to the community. In fact lacking the rhetorical skill of argumentation in 1:10-4:21, Paul's instruction in the ensuing chapters would be devoid of power and would carry no real conviction (Wanamaker 2006, 350).<sup>57</sup>

### 3.2. Metaphor and Ideology

Wanamaker (2006) who focuses mainly on the argumentative character of Paul's discourse throughout 1 Corinthians 1-5 has demonstrated that 1 Cor. 4:14-21 is the zenith of one vital line of argument in chs. 1-4. This argument plays a key rhetorical function in the apostle's ideological effort to re-establish his authority prior to his endeavour to assert his authority concerning a serious moral problem in the community in ch. 5. Furthermore Wanamaker (2003b, 116, 124-129; 2006, 342) demonstrates that Paul on several occasions engages in the ideological mode of narrativisation through narrativising the origins of the Corinthian Christian

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<sup>54</sup>Cf. Penner (2005c, 227-235).

<sup>55</sup>For a similar discussion also see (Wanamaker 2006, 340).

<sup>56</sup>Also see Burke (2003, 109). Similarly Schüssler Fiorenza (2000, 50) believes that "Paul's rhetoric seeks to maintain his own authority by engaging the rhetorics of othering, censure, vituperation, exclusion, vilification, and even violence toward the community".

<sup>57</sup>Wanamaker (2003b, 120) asserts that "Paul's rhetoric was employed in the service of power in the sense that his power was institutionally understood as his authority to require obedience from the members of the Corinthian community which he had established".



community by employing a set of interconnected metaphors drawn from the cultural domain of that epoch.<sup>58</sup>

According to Thompson (1990, 61-62) narrativisation permits the claim to legitimacy through stories about the past. These stories act to validate the exercise of power by those who wield it while simultaneously making those without power aware of their lack of it. The call to God and Christ, by Paul, to validate his past action of preaching the gospel to the Corinthians seems, therefore, to be an act of ideological narrativisation as described by Thompson (1990, 61-62). Wanamaker (2006, 341) believes that by this ideological move Paul aligns himself with the saving activity of God in his initial preaching of Christ crucified to the Corinthian congregation.<sup>59</sup> Every time he does so, he re-inscribes his own place as the founder-progenitor of the community, thus legitimating his position of authority in relation to the community (Wanamaker 2006, 341). He also implicitly legitimises his masculinity and stature as the virile *paterfamilias*, the embodiment of “male generative power” (Vorster 2003, 68) to the Corinthian congregation. Once again merely functioning to legitimate normative stereotypes of masculinity and to re-inscribe notions of andronormativity from the hegemonic Graeco-Roman culture. This serves an additional ideological function of constituting the *habitus* of the male as “regulatory ideal” (Butler 1993, xi, xii) as materialised through the body of Paul.<sup>60</sup>

Vorster (2003, 70) notes that the formation of power dynamics “forms, infuses and pervades the bodies it controls”.<sup>61</sup> He asserts further, “The body that is structured, serves again to

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<sup>58</sup>For further discussion see Wanamaker (2003b, 124-129; 2006, 342-343). On narrativisation as an ideological tool see Thompson (1990, 61-62). Castelli (1991a, 116) and Given (2001, 94-95) are useful in displaying that Paul first seeks to re-establish his authority in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 before attempting to resolve specific issues whose solution are contingent upon whether the Corinthians accept his instruction. Their analysis in my opinion, however, lacks the ideological methodology and programmatic analysis that is crucial to an ideological investigation of texts as may be seen in Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b; 2006). Sisson (2003, 245) mentions that the “use of Foucault’s theory of power” by Castelli (1991) “is more applicable to the analysis of an interpreter’s ideology than Paul’s own”.

<sup>59</sup>In a different article Wanamaker (2003b, 126) asks the rhetorical question, “But how, it may be asked, is this important theological insight ideological?” The answer he asserts is that it was not merely any account of Christ crucified that was the foundation of salvation for the Corinthians, but it was the one preached to them by Paul (1:21, 23).

<sup>60</sup>Using the notion of a “regulatory body”, gleaned from Butler (1993, x, xii), Vorster (2003, 66) argues that “early Christian female bodies and identities were crushed both by the Roman Imperium and early Christian patriarchal leadership”.

<sup>61</sup>Burrus (2007, 3) mentions that “neither gender nor sexual difference operates independently of other structurings of power and other formations of identity and subjectivity. Class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and

structure bodies” (Vorster 2003, 70). “This operation produces the subjects that it subjects; that is, it subjects them in and through the compulsory power relations effective as their formative principle” (Butler 1993, 9). Similarly I argue that Paul’s bodily structuring serves to structure the bodies of the Corinthian community as he positions himself as the founder-progenitor of the community. Ironically the bodies “reproduced conformed to the regulatory body of the Graeco-Roman world” (Vorster 2003, 82) and so re-inscribes replicated gender structurings that favoured hegemonic masculinity(ies).

We may go further in our analysis, however, in that Paul’s hierarchically dominate position of authority, with its concomitant power, are rationalised for the Corinthians through his claim to divine authorisation which simultaneously is postulated to be a unique appointment (Castelli 1991a, 107).<sup>62</sup> Others could have this level of appointment as may be seen in 1 Cor. 4:1 and 9 and also 15:7-9.<sup>63</sup> In the rhetorical picture created by Paul, however, he does not allow anyone else, including Apollos, to have access to direct divine appointment to authority and power over the Corinthian congregation.<sup>64</sup> The perception of Paul’s unique position of leadership among the Corinthian congregation and other leaders in Corinth is further legitimated in 4:15 where Paul concedes the prospect that the Corinthians may have numerous *παιδαγωγοί*, but only one father, namely, himself.<sup>65</sup>

colonialism intersect with and thus inflect gender, inevitably and irreducibly. So too does religion. Mappings are synchronically complex and never simply uni-directional, in other words”.

<sup>62</sup>Schüssler Fiorenza (1999, 119) notes that Paul does not authenticate his authority as an apostle among other apostles but rather endorses his right as “the *sole* founder and father of the Corinthian community”. Also see Fiore (1985, 97,99) who maintains that Paul constructs the notion of himself as the sole authority for how the Corinthians should live as Christians and not merely as a fellow worker with God. Burke (2003, 108) mentions that by depicting himself in this way “Paul relativizes the position of all others (i.e. Apollos, Cephas) and asserts his own vital role” as pre-eminent founding father (Burke 2003, 119). Also see Wanamaker (2003a, 211-212; 2005a, 845).

<sup>63</sup>The differentiation between Paul and other workers is particularly stressed in the elaboration of the master builder metaphor since those who build on Paul’s foundation will be judged by their work. For a discussion of the ideological strategies implicit in the use of this metaphor and the other agricultural metaphors in 3:5-15 see Wanamaker (2006, 342-343). Also see Gaventa (1996, 111-112).

<sup>64</sup>Contra Witherington (1995, 147) who believes, however, that Paul classes Apollos with himself. Cf. Wanamaker (2003b, 136) and Given (2001, 93-94).

<sup>65</sup>Ramsaran (1996, 36-37) regards v. 15a as a maxim depicting standard cultural wisdom regarding the hierarchical relationship between fathers and *παιδαγωγοί*, which is followed by further supporting reason in v. 15b, that is reflected by the second *γάρ* in the verse. Cf. (Martin 1990, 122); Liew (2011, 131).

In the household structure of the ancient world the *παιδαγωγοί* were normally slaves who functioned as the guardians, guides, and disciplinarians of the male children of the household at the direction of the father and head of the household until they reached their majority (Wanamaker 2003b, 135; Wanamaker 2006, 346).<sup>66</sup> The *παιδαγωγός* were not, however, teachers since the role of the *παιδαγωγός* and the *διδάσκαλος* (teacher) were clearly differentiated (Danker 2000).<sup>67</sup>

According to Wanamaker (2006, 346) three key inferences may be deduced from 1 Cor. 4:15a. First, other leaders in the community are under Paul's paternal governance. Second, and in reference to 3:1-4, the Corinthians were spiritually inept and childlike since only immature children required *παιδαγωγοί*. And third, because of his position as their father in the faith, he has the rightful authority to instruct them concerning what he regards as proper moral and social conduct.<sup>68</sup> They do not have many fathers; in fact Paul is their only father because of his preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ to them (v. 15b) (Wanamaker 2006, 345-346).<sup>69</sup> To be more precise he says that he "begot them", thereby emphasising the unique generative role of a father in creating offspring, the very thing that no one else could do in Corinth after Paul's founding mission work.

It should be observed that Paul implies his position as a father by saying that they cannot have many fathers, but he never expressly calls himself their father. Instead he uses the procreative role of the father to describe the basis of his fatherhood over the Corinthians. Wanamaker (2003b, 135-136) refers to this mediation of power as reflecting a "triad of interconnected metaphors which present Paul as father, other leaders, including Apollos, as guardians and disciplinarians, and the Corinthians themselves as children".<sup>70</sup> In this instance there is a clear hierarchical

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<sup>66</sup>For a discussion of the role of the *παιδαγωγός* in the ancient world see Young (1987, 150-169). Also see Witherington (1995, 147).

<sup>67</sup>On a father's responsibility for his children's education see Burke (2003, 104-105).

<sup>68</sup>For further explication of the *παιδαγωγός* metaphor that Paul employs in v. 15a see Wanamaker (2006, 346).

<sup>69</sup>Also see Martin (1990, 122).

<sup>70</sup>Cf. Castelli (1991a, 105,108); Mount (2005, 328); Wanamaker (2005a, 840; 2005b, 417,428). Mount (2005, 328) discusses the fact that Paul constructs an image of himself as a "spirit master" among the Corinthian community, which plays a crucial role in his assertion of power and authority in his correspondence with them. Also see Given (2001, 102). Witherington (1995, 261) does not see hierarchy of rank within the Christian leadership structure as mediated by Paul. He also argues against any notion that Paul seeks to establish himself

mediation of power, and this power is only accessible to men. Paul receives his authority and power directly from Christ (1:1, 17). Timothy receives his from Paul (4:15-17a). The Corinthian Christians are to receive theirs from Timothy (4:17b).<sup>71</sup> As noted in chapter four of this thesis, this asymmetrical leadership hierarchy is a highly gendered hierarchy which is male dominated and constructed using predominantly masculine imagery (God, Christ, Paul) that excludes women any representation. This construction in itself is an ideological construction in that it delegitimizes women and makes them invisible while simultaneously legitimates their invisibility and subordination to men.

The notion of “collective identity” (Castells 2010, 7–8),<sup>72</sup> is once again brought back into focus now as it may prove useful in thinking about the type of “collective identity” that is ideologically constructed in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. In accordance with the rhetoric of the discourse in 1 Cor. 4:16-17 and 11:1 it seems that a masculine and androcentric “collective identity” that intersectionally subsumes women and simultaneously re-inscribes the andronormativity of that epoch is constructed by Paul’s articulation of mimicry. Using this ideological legitimation strategy Paul assimilates both masculine and feminine gendered identities into his own bodiliness under the guise of imitation which is founded upon his status as their father in Christ (1 Cor. 4.15). In 1 Cor. 4:16-17 and 11:1 Paul admonishes the Corinthian community to imitate him and in doing so claims for himself a “reproducible body” (Liew 2011, 138). As Liew (2011, 138) states, this reproducible body is “simultaneously a double agent that can disrupt, if not exactly dissolve, the scripted performativity of race/ethnicity [and gender] by performing its contingency, changeability, and convertibility”.<sup>73</sup>

It is my contention that this disruption of Paul’s reproducible body is also able to function ideologically to script the performativity of those bodies in the Corinthian congregation that will accept Paul’s authority and mimic his example. In 4:16-17 in particular this imitation comes

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as having greater spiritual gifts than Timothy, the other missionaries or the Corinthian community (Witherington 1995, 262-263, 283).

<sup>71</sup>On Timothy as an authorised teacher of Paul’s “children”, the Corinthian Christians, see Burke (2003, 111). Similarly, but in relation to Philippians, Sisson (2003, 252) refers to this type of hierarchical construction as a “hierarchical economy of salvation”.

<sup>72</sup>See chapter one of this thesis, and in particular page 17.

<sup>73</sup>My emphasis.

through an intermediary, namely, Timothy who serves as a catalyst to remind the Corinthian community of the type of role they needed to imitate. As Timothy replicates the model of Paul so too the Corinthian community are instructed to model Paul by replicating Timothy's modeling of Paul. Pointing to Timothy in the letter implicitly strengthens Paul's appeal to imitation.<sup>74</sup>

Since the female body was regarded as an imperfect version of the male body, in terms of the one-sex gender model, Paul's call for imitation in 1 Cor. 4:16-17 and 11:1, could also imply a call for female bodies to slide up the gendered hierarchy and achieve a status of perfection (masculinity). Vorster (2003, 82) in his work on early Christian "entextualisation of female martyr stories" has demonstrated, however, that in accordance with ancient Graeco-Roman gendered ideologies that any chance for female bodies to somehow act in "tandem with that of the male" always turns out in the end "to empower and promote male interests".<sup>75</sup> Paul's call for imitation, turns out to be an analogous call for women and men to imitate his masculinity and in so doing merely serves to perpetuate ancient gendered hierarchies. For Corinthian women to mimic Paul would also mean detaching from their femaleness with an inevitable loss of female identity.<sup>76</sup>

1 Corinthians is gendered ideologically not only as it relates to women directly or indirectly, but similarly as it constructs arguments in terms of masculinity(ies).<sup>77</sup> The leadership hierarchy is also constructed along masculine lines with Christ at the apex, followed by Paul, Timothy, and the Corinthian men. The Corinthian women are not even included in this hierarchy and are subsumed under their husbands, at least in the case of married women. This too represents a kyriarchal and intersectional gendered dynamic in that single women and widowed women are not given any scope to lead and remain unnamed and unrepresented lest they remarry, in the case of widows, or marry in the case of single women.

In keeping with the dominant gendered ethos of that context women's identity was subsumed into that of their fathers or husbands in light of patriarchy. Commenting on the unequal level of discrimination and stigma within ancient times, Marchal (2008, 98, 107) demonstrates

<sup>74</sup>Cf. Marchal (2008, 61) and his depiction of a similar imitation scenario in Philippians.

<sup>75</sup>Cf. Pomeroy (1975, 185) who notes that when certain Roman women excelled in what was regarded as "male" spaces that they were described in masculine imagery.

<sup>76</sup>Cf. Vorster (2003, 88).

<sup>77</sup>Cf. Marchal (2008, 86) and how he applies this gendered logic to Philippians.

that the ideological gendered system was built on a structure that was directly related to systems of domination in terms of gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, social status and imperial power dynamics. Thus a complex intersectional and kyriarchal gendered web was spun in which people could be doubly, triply or quadruply marginalised depending on where they were placed in this intricate web.<sup>78</sup> Mount (2005, 327) notes,

Amid the diversity of spiritual powers allotted to various individuals possessed by the spirit, Paul claims not only to be an apostle (the gift that occupies first position in his hierarchy in 12:28-31a) but also to be one who prophesies (the second gift) and one who speaks in tongues (the gift that occupies last position in his hierarchy of spiritual gifts). As one who both prophesies and speaks in tongues, Paul is best able to judge their relative merits.

While he can ask the Corinthians in 12:29-30, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all workers of miracles? ... Do all speak in tongues?” and anticipate a resounding no in response, he himself claims to have all these gifts of the spirit and serves as the mediator of these gifts to the community (1 Cor 9:2). Mount (2005, 328) notes that Paul’s “authority to establish a hierarchy rests on this construction of the superiority of his spiritual power – and this construction of authority will come back to haunt him as his relation to the Corinthians deteriorates”.

According to this analysis Paul constructs his status so that he is positioned above others as the most powerful male in the community. And in so doing, he creates a direct and “systematically asymmetrical” (Thompson 1990, 151) relation of power between himself and the Corinthian Christian community. Wanamaker (2006, 362) makes a further distinction and demonstrates that Paul’s rhetorical power does not rest in his spiritual abilities, but rather in a far more important relationship that he has with the Corinthian community. He observes,

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<sup>78</sup>On women’s doubled or tripled colonization, see Dube (2000).

Paul does not claim that it is his apostolic status that empowers him to instruct the Corinthians regarding appropriate moral conduct, since others could presumably claim that status. What no one else could claim and therefore the basis of authority and power that Paul maintains is uniquely his, comes from his role as the founder/progenitor of the community, a role that he asserts gives him power and responsibility analogous to a father in relation to the Corinthians (Wanamaker 2006, 362).

Thompson (1990, 63) purports that metaphors are a vital ideological tool since they obscure relations of power by endowing people with characteristics that they do not really possess. A further ideological mode embedded in the discourse of the text may in this regard be noted and relates to “dissimulation” in the form of “displacement” (Thompson 1990, 62). In 3:2 and 4:14-15 Paul creates the idea of his own powerfulness with the use of the father-children metaphor, that allows him to accentuate his divinely appointed ministry.<sup>79</sup> The metaphoric source domain “father” is sketched on to the target domain “Paul’s appointment by Christ”. The source domain draws on mundane content in antiquity and is used to give meaning to Paul’s appointment by Christ.<sup>80</sup> Paul as the metaphorical procreator of the community instructs the Corinthians’ to amalgamate their understanding of what everyday fathers are like and what they do, with his function in the formation of his family, the Christian community in Corinth (Wanamaker 2006, 344). As Wanamaker (2003b; 2005b, 427) has demonstrated, Paul’s implementation of the father-children metaphor functions ideologically to establish his status of superiority over the community at Corinth since he is the father figure who knows exactly what they

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<sup>79</sup>Wanamaker (2003a, 211) argues against the assumption of Witherington (1995, 445) and Martin (1986, 332) and notes that their depiction of Paul as the “groomsman for Christ the bridegroom misses the role which Paul attributes to himself as the protector of the virtue of the bride. This is not the role of the groomsman but the role of the father of the bride” (Wanamaker 2003a, 211). Wanamaker (2003a, 211) cites Sirach 42:10-14 as the primary evidence to support his assertion.

<sup>80</sup>See Danesi (2004) for the understanding of metaphor used here. Castelli (1991b, 100-101) in relation to 1 Corinthians has rightfully argued that the image of father must be read in cultural context, that is, in relationship to the paternal role in Graeco-Roman society. Given the cultural context, Castelli (1991, 100-101) posits that the paternal role in Graeco-Roman society was one that afforded the father with total authority over children as well as concomitant ontological superiority. Similarly see Capes, Reeves and Richards (2007, 43). For further discussion also see Burke (2003, 96-105). Burke (2003, 109) disagrees with one aspect of the argument as presented by Castelli (1991, 100-101) maintaining that she is mistaken when she concludes that the paternal metaphor of necessity does not evoke a sense of kindness or love.

need and depicts the ideological technique of dissimulating social relationships through metaphors which transfer characteristics to people which in reality they do not really have.

The mapping of the metaphoric source domain of father by Paul, which encompasses the social expectations of moral authority and disciplinary power, onto his status as founding apostle, serves to support his claim to these attributes which are associated with physical fatherhood in antiquity (Wanamaker 2005b, 427).<sup>81</sup> In this case the positive connotations attributed to the functional designation “father” serve the ideological purpose of boosting Paul’s status and power and also serve as the basis for the set of commands and prohibitions that he issues later on in the discourse.<sup>82</sup>

Burke (2003, 100-105) has identified five key aspects of the traditional social expectations of the father-child relationship in antiquity from a broad selection of ancient texts.<sup>83</sup> Firstly undergirding every discussion of family life in antiquity is the common assumption that parent-child relations were hierarchical in nature, with the father at the top of the hierarchy.<sup>84</sup> Secondly, and closely related to this was the idea of the father’s hierarchical (and tyrannical) authority in all matters relating to both minor and adult children. Third, the authority of the father necessitated obedience from his children. Fourth, fathers had to present themselves as ethical models for their children to imitate and were presumed to be affectionate towards their offspring. And finally, fathers were accountable for their children’s ethical education and social and cultural education.

This metaphor, from an ancient Mediterranean cultural perspective in the context of the family, involves one who has unchallenged authority that empowers him for his social role. In drawing on the ultimate figure of male power in the households of antiquity Paul strategically places himself in the prime position as someone endowed with “moral authority” and “discipli-

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<sup>81</sup>Wanamaker (2005b, 416-418) applies the notion of the moral order metaphor as delineated by Lakoff and Johnson (1999, 299-311) and provides an erudite discussion of how this metaphor can illuminate a discussion on 1 Corinthians 1-5.

<sup>82</sup>Cf. Wanamaker (2003a, 212) and a similar discussion by him in relation to 2 Corinthians 10-13.

<sup>83</sup>For a discussion of the importance of the father metaphor to ancient Roman society see Lassen (1997, 111-112).

<sup>84</sup>Wanamaker (2006, 344) in relation to this point by Burke (2003, 101) clarifies and states, “Obviously this authority did not apply to married daughters who were transferred to the authority of their own husbands or their husband’s family in the event of the husband’s death”. Quoting Winter (2003, 17), Wanamaker (2006, 344) clarifies further and notes that in fact, “[t]he power of husbands over their wives can be paralleled with that of the father over his children”.



nary power” (Wanamaker 2005b, 427) that enables him to speak publicly and assertively as one would expect from a father in that epoch.<sup>85</sup> In the case of 1 Cor. 4:14-21 the masculine role of progenitor surfaces, and Paul constructs an image of himself as *the* dominant male within the household of the church community using the ideological mode of legitimation once again. On the other hand, the negative characterisation of the Corinthians as infants in Christ (3:1),<sup>86</sup> who have remained in an infantile state that keeps them from a more mature faith, underscores Paul’s own dominance and control of the relation with his readers (Wanamaker 2003b, 129-130).

In the previous chapter, and in agreement with Gaventa (1996, 101-113), I maintained that Paul’s metaphorical statement that he had given the Corinthians milk to drink (3:2) foregrounds himself as a nursing mother to the Corinthians and that this, given the dominant gendered constructions and representations of the ancient gender context,<sup>87</sup> might have called into question his masculinity.<sup>88</sup> Also the role in which Paul is foregrounded is a feminine role and as such constructs and represents femininity in the text. This feminine imagery is taken from one of the dominant family images from that culture and in doing so plays the implicit ideological role of re-inscribing normative gender stereotypes.

As already mentioned Wanamaker (2003b, 129-130) has demonstrated that Paul’s use of the infant metaphor functions to openly cement Paul’s authority over the community as his parenting role gives him the power to direct them as he sees fit. According to Komaravalli

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<sup>85</sup>Wanamaker (2003b; 2006) has further demonstrated that when Paul classifies himself as the Corinthian Christians’ father in Christ (1 Cor. 4:14-15) the significance of this symbolic representation of his relationship with his converts should be comprehended against the cultural conception of what a father was in both Jewish and Graeco-Roman culture of that time. Furthermore his analysis makes clear that Paul’s use of the father-children metaphor in his relation with the Corinthians has ideological significance in terms of his claim to the right to exercise power over them and to dispute the claims of challengers to power.

<sup>86</sup>This understanding is taken from Castelli (1991a, 105) and her assertion that the characterisation of the Corinthians as infants in Christ is a pejorative one, which functions to reiterate the political nature of the metaphor of the father-child relationship and implies an asymmetrical relationship. Cf. Komaravalli (2007, 76).

<sup>87</sup>See chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>88</sup>Contra Wanamaker (2003b, 129, n.65) who asserts that Gaventa (1996) “reads too much into Paul’s metaphorical statement...” and that “[s]he misses the point that Paul’s claim, even as nursing mother or wetnurse is that he took responsibility for deciding when the Corinthians were mature enough for the deeper elements of the wisdom of God and that in his judgment they were not ready for such things as long as they were factious and propagating factionalism in the community”. I suggest that given the hegemonic construction(s) and representation(s) of “ideal” masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) of the ancient Mediterranean that the analysis of Gaventa (1996, 101-113) sheds light on this context. For further discussion see chapter three and four of this thesis.

(2007, 13) “Paul’s application of metaphors enables him to firmly re-establish and sustain his position of authority over the church community and to address the challenge of factionalism within the Corinthian church”. This comes about by the ideological mode of dissimulation whereby normative social relations are tied to metaphors that provide people with qualities that in reality they do not have. In this example Paul employs the negative depiction of the Corinthians as infants in Christ (3:1), who have continued in an infantile condition that prevents them from reaching maturity of faith, in order to emphasise his own supremacy and power (Wanamaker 2003b, 129-130).

I argue that the construction of Paul as a nursing mother in 1 Cor. 3:1-2 may also be read from a gendered vantage point which alludes to a gendered ideological “hidden transcript” (Scott 1990, 102) within the text which serves the ideological function of buttressing Paul’s position of power. Through dissimulation the positive qualities of a nursing mother, namely, nurturer, sustainer and care-giver are transposed onto Paul and equip him with the concomitant authority, just as mothers have authority over their children. Komoravalli (2007, 75) has demonstrated the efficacy of understanding the everyday social and cultural *topos* of the ancient household as a complex metaphor used by Paul to validate his relationship with the Corinthian community. One of the primary relationships that functioned within the household dynamic was that of the mother as nurturer/caregiver and the nursing mother metaphor is mapped on to Paul as the source domain in 1 Cor. 3:1-4. The characteristics of the nursing mother in this metaphor is, therefore, transferred to Paul and serves to present him as the nurturer/sustainer of the Corinthian community.

According to Komoravalli (2007, 76), the relationship of the nursing mother with her offspring “presupposes a giver, who is dominant in the relationship, and a receiver, who is dependent in the relationship, where this particular relationship forms the key aspect in Paul’s application of the metaphor”. Given the gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean as delineated in chapter three of this thesis, the aforementioned statement by Komaravalli fails to take heed of an important aspect implicit in his assertion. The articulation of an active (dominant) and passive (submissive) is also primarily a gendered articulation and plays a role in constructing and representing gender normativities. In this regard and in light of the hegemonic gender system(s) of that time period this gendered performance by Paul would in fact serve to re-inscribe

normative notions of hegemonic masculinity as it renders Paul as the active and dominant “giver” and the Corinthians as the passive and submissive “receiver”. A direct result of this is the ideological construction and representation of ideal notions of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies).

From the outset what seems at first glance to be a diminishing of masculine virtue, when Paul takes on a role that is deemed feminine in accordance to ancient gender standards, in fact turns out to be a rhetorical verification of virile masculinity and docile femininity that serves to buttress Paul’s dominance over the Corinthian community and further serves to subordinate the Corinthian community to an effeminate role as passive subordinates.<sup>89</sup> As Braun (2002, 112) mentions, “[E]arly Christianity reflects and participates, even further sanctifies, the regnant Graeco-Roman gender ideology that pathologised femaleness at many levels and linked theories on the pathology of femaleness to strategies of containing and controlling women”. Not only does the use of this complex mother-infant metaphor serve to authenticate Paul’s authority and dominance over the Corinthian community and shame the Corinthians as immature and still needing baby food as Komoravalli (2007, 75-76) has argued, but, the use of this complex metaphor, in fact also serves to construct and represent gender which mimics the normative notions of archetypal gender roles from that ancient context. In doing so this complex metaphor even further validates an image of Paul that is dominant (masculine) and authoritative and serves to reinscribe and maintain his position within the Corinthian community.

Komaravalli (2007, 74) also notes the significance of mother’s milk in antiquity and in his investigation links the role of the nursing mother in the household as a metaphorical source to display the importance of nurturing by Paul for the Corinthian community. Paul, therefore, is not only pictured as the father of the Corinthian community with the concomitant power and authority that this role encompassed as we have noted earlier, but he is also their mother. Ideologically this latter emphasis constructs a powerful rhetographic image that requires further articulation here.

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<sup>89</sup>Cf. DeBaufre and Nasrallah (2011, 159).

### 3.3. Imitation and Ideology

After setting himself up as their mother (3:2) and father in Christ (4:15), Paul tells the Corinthians to imitate him (4:16).<sup>90</sup> By doing this Paul creates a rationalisation that once again serves to legitimate his claim to power and position as unique-progenitor of the Corinthian community. Moore (1996, 30), although not using an ideological approach in his investigation, correctly notes that Paul's call for the Corinthian congregation to imitate him was an attempt by Paul in 4:14-17 and 5:3 to legitimate the subjection of others.

Castelli (1991a, 13) has demonstrated that imitation is embedded in a hierarchical relationship of power. She argues that Paul has implemented a notion of mimesis that was totally "naturalized within first-century culture", to the extent that the "term would evoke for the original recipients the associations it held in that epoch" (Castelli 1991a, 13). According to her analysis at the base of the command by Paul to the Corinthians to be imitators of him is a more complex understanding of the privileged position of the apostle to construct the early communities within a hierarchical "economy of sameness" (Castelli 1991a, 16). She maintains that, "in this way, mimesis functions, in Paul's writings, as a discourse of power, as the reinscription of power relations within the social formation of early Christian communities" (Castelli 1991a, 17). The notion of imitation as constructed by Castelli (1991a, 21) adheres to two important and related aspects.

First, it implies a correlation between at least two things (a model and a copy) and contained in that relationship is the systematic transportation of one of those things (the copy) assimilating the characteristics of the other (the model) or becoming similar to the other. Second, this represents a hierarchical interaction, because mimicry does not entail the reciprocal and concurrent travelling of both things moving in the direction of sameness. Instead, one thing is firmly set in place, and the other, changes itself into an estimate of the first. The preferential

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<sup>90</sup>Scholars have observed that the rhetorical strategy of Paul appealing to himself as the example of proper behaviour to be imitated was contingent upon his assumed support at Corinth (Mitchell 1991, 302; Marchal 2008, 86). Based upon 2 Corinthians it appears that this strategy proved to be unsuccessful (Mitchell 1991, 303).

flow of movement is from dissimilarity toward similarity, or better still, toward sameness. Since the type of imitation in the texts being investigated is not merely sketching an imitative relationship, but instead is demanding one, the mimicry becomes normative and normalising (Castelli 1991a, 21).

Castelli (1991a, 16) has outlined a few of the main characterisations of the notion of imitation as delineated from ancient discourses, namely:

- (1) Mimesis is always articulated as a hierarchical relationship, whereby the “copy” is but a derivation of the “model” and cannot aspire to the privileged status of the “model”.
- (2) Mimesis presupposes a valorization of sameness over against difference. Certain conceptual equations accompany this move: unity and harmony are associated with sameness while difference is attributed characteristics of diffusion, disorder, and discord.
- (3) The notion of the authority of the model plays a fundamental role in the mimetic relationship (Castelli 1991a, 16).

Marchal (2008, 67) critiques the hierarchical model-copy notion of mimesis by Castelli (1991a) and notes regarding her analysis that the “exegetical stress on the dominating effects of Paul’s discourse leans toward giving the Paul presented in these letters too much definitional ‘power’, thus, in a sense, repeating and reproducing it without further interruption or interrogation”. This type of reading against the grain has been at the forefront of the feminist rhetorical work of scholars like Schüssler Fiorenza (2009, 1-23), Wire (1990b), and Kittredge (2003, 318–333). Marchal (2008, 70) notes, “If imitation is meant to be a demonstration of the model’s superiority, then, in a sense the model’s authority is not evident or natural without the imitation by the copy. It is an anxious request”.

The authoritative status of Paul must be performatively replicated by the Corinthian community so as to demonstrate the efficacy of Paul’s authority. If it is not repeated, then it would imply that Paul does not have the authority claimed. In this regard, and keeping in mind 2 Corinthians again, it would seem that Paul’s strategy was not as successful as he would have

hoped, and this may even have been as a result of competing (female) voices in the discourse.<sup>91</sup> It seems, therefore, that the content of Paul's exhortation takes us back again to the topic of imitation and reflects the normative hierarchical and androcentric understanding of the responsible father from that epoch who provides a moral role model for his offspring to imitate (Burke 2003, 105).

As Castelli (1991a, 103) has pointed out, however, such imitation is never neutral. In fact it strengthens the authoritative position of the model, in this case, Paul. Thus imitation has to do with power and the control over those who are placed in the role of imitators from an ideological perspective (Wanamaker 2006, 346-347).<sup>92</sup> Imitation also, however, has to do with Paul's own imitated body as a site for power negotiation or contestation.<sup>93</sup> Vorster (2014, 3) mentions that bodies act as "sites where power relations are produced, contested, amplified, refracted, and reproduced". Ideologically, therefore, the call by Paul to imitate him (his performative body) not only acts as a means of authenticating his authoritative position among the Corinthians, but also serves to subordinate all those who are to imitate him, namely, Timothy, and the Corinthian community. More importantly, from the perspective of this thesis, however, this call for imitation is also gendered as it involves the replication of a masculine image and model. In this manner, the call for imitation can also be perceived as a call to emulate masculinity as the "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 1993) since the collective identity of the Corinthian community is -----

<sup>91</sup>In this regard see Wire (1990b; 2000, 124-129). Imitation can also become a form of resistance and mockery as Scott (1990, 102-103) states, "The conflict will accordingly take a dialogic form in which the language of the dialogue will invariably borrow heavily from the terms of the dominant ideology prevailing in the public transcript. . . . We may consider the dominant discourse as a plastic idiom or dialect that is capable of carrying an enormous variety of meanings, including those that are subversive of their use as intended by the dominant" . For further discussion of this see Scott (1990).

<sup>92</sup>For a discussion of the rhetorical syllogism that may be seen in 4:14-16 see Wanamaker (2006, 347). Contra Castelli (1991a) and Wanamaker (2006), Witherington (1995, 145) maintains that it is incorrect to say that Paul is imposing himself between the Corinthians and Christ by instructing them to imitate him as he does Christ. He mentions also that "[w]hatever sort of hierarchy Paul presupposes, it entails an inverted pyramid where leaders are enslaved, belong to the community, and must serve it from below" (Witherington 1995, 145). I am more inclined in this regard to go with Økland (2004, 208) who asserts that imitation is an act of mediation that presupposes a hierarchical structure with the community at the base and God at the apex. According to her analysis the structure runs as follows: "Community/Paul/Christ/God" (Økland 2004, 208).

<sup>93</sup>Liew (2011, 132) also notices the importance of scrutinising Paul's body as a mechanism of meaning making.

masculine and ideologically re-inscribes androcentrism.<sup>94</sup> So too this could possibly lead to replicated gender structurings of androcentrism which in itself is ideological. This rationalisation also has the potential to function in the ideological mode of unification since the Corinthian congregation are all instructed to imitate Paul.<sup>95</sup> By this unification strategy it seems that Paul seeks to align the majority in the community with himself as the messenger of God's wisdom against those who are socially prominent and precipitated the factionalism that so concerned Paul (Welborn 1987, 85-111; 1987, 320-346).<sup>96</sup>

Paradoxically this in turn has the potential to serve in the ideological mode of fragmentation since Paul implies a key differentiation within the community between those who will imitate him and those who will not. This is perfectly in keeping with the delineation of ideology by Thompson (1990). In fact Thompson (1990, 60) mentions, "I do not want to claim that these five modes. . . always operate independently of one another; on the contrary, these modes may overlap and reinforce one another". Thompson (1990, 65), describes the ideological mode of fragmentation as being used to prevent individuals or a group from effectively challenging the dominant group. According to Thompson (1990, 65) ideological fragmentation comes about when "[r]elations of domination" are "maintained, not by unifying individuals in a collectivity, but by fragmenting those individuals and groups that might be capable of mounting

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<sup>94</sup>Bourdieu (1993, 75) asserts, "'Symbolic capital' is to be understood as economic or political capital that is disavowed, misrecognized and thereby recognized, hence legitimate, a 'credit' which under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees 'economic profit'".

<sup>95</sup>According to the strategy of unification as established by Thompson (1990, 64), "Relations of domination may be established and sustained by constructing, at the symbolic level, a form of unity which embraces individuals in a collective identity, irrespective of differences and divisions which may separate them" (Thompson 1990, 64). Wanamaker (2003a, 213) has shown that 1 Corinthians 1-4 may be regarded as an instance of unification where Paul unites all of the divisive groups in Corinth (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 4:6-7) under the authority of Jesus Christ and his salvific work on the cross (1:17-18; 3:21-23). Paul also includes himself in this unification process, and by doing this, constructs his strategic position as a master builder, upon who all other leaders in the Corinthian community must build (3:10-15). Paul's pre-eminence is established even more with the use of the father metaphor as he configures himself as their only father in the faith (4:14-16, 21) and the ideological use of unification is also reflected significantly in the body metaphor (1 Cor. 12:4-31).

<sup>96</sup>For this understanding see Theissen (1982, 69-119) who argues that the conflict in the Corinthian community was between groups of different social and specifically class positions. This view is now widely held. See among others Mitchell (1991, 264); May (2004, 6); Scholer (2008, 43, 56, 83).

an effective challenge to the dominant group. . .” (Thompson 1990, 65).<sup>97</sup>

“Differentiation” is one strategy and highlights the diversity, the dissimilarity and separation among groups and individuals to thwart their efforts to unite in opposition to the existing relations of power or those who wield it. Differentiation utilises symbolic constructions in which emphasis is placed on the “distinctions, differences and divisions between individuals and groups” which “disunite” them in order to prevent them effectively challenging the existing relations of power (Thompson 1990, 65).

As has been seen from the previous chapters, 1 Corinthians inscribes normative unequal relations of power and authority between men and women from the sex/gender system(s) of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture of the first century, and in so doing it is implicitly steeped with ideology. The whole of 1 Corinthians is blatantly ideological because throughout its discourse Paul uses his legitimate authority to justify the subordination of women to men within the community. Even ch. 5 has patriarchy written all over it since there is no issue about the woman involved, only the man. In this regard masculinity is centred and placed in a position of power ideologically in the discussion. Femininity, on the other hand, is silenced, abjected and placed on the periphery in the articulation of this text. Chapter 6 is also written from a male perspective and seeks to shame men for sex with prostitutes. However, in the way in which the text is articulated, women are not directly addressed, and when they are addressed in the passage they are portrayed as prostitutes. Also as sketched in the rhetoric of the text, women are not seen to glorify God in their bodies because man is the glory of God and woman the glory of her husband. In 1 Corinthians 7 male and female representation around marriage is discussed at lengths and has an implicit role in supporting patriarchal power. The first few verses of ch. 7 seem to imply sexual equality, but much of the rest of the chapter addresses male concerns and only occasionally female concerns. Put differently the chapter is written from a patriarchal and androcentric perspective.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>This may be the reason Paul seeks to oust the person in 1 Corinthians 5 since he was clearly a person of social importance in the wider society and therefore possibly one of the patrons of a dissenting group. This action by Paul serves, to solidify his dominant position in the community and jettison competitive and dissenting voices that pose a threat to his authority.



### 3.4. Worship and Ideology

1 Cor. 11:2ff and 14:34ff deal with women and men in worship. In 11:3-16 Paul engages in fragmentation by treating men and women as separate categories in terms of the nature of their relation with God. Men and women in the discourse of 1 Cor. 11:3-16 are clearly fragmented. Man is described as the head of the woman (v. 3);<sup>99</sup> men are to pray with uncovered heads (vv. 4 and 7), whereas women are to pray with their heads covered (vv. 5-6). Men in the text are described as the image and glory of God (v.7a), whereas women are described as the glory of men (v. 7b). The fragmentation continues to the point where it is implied that men have authority over women, since women cannot have authority over men, ergo, men must have authority over women (vv. 3 and 7-9 ). Also the κεφαλὴ metaphor inscribes male superiority over women. Furthermore there seems to be a noticeable kyriarchal gendered chain of power with God as head of Christ, Christ as head of his male followers, and male followers as the head of their women. Only women do not get to be superior to other categories. Also the text asserts that “man did not come from woman, but woman from man” (v.8) and “neither was man created for woman, but woman for man” (v.9). All of this institutionalises male domination of women in the church at Corinth. Verses 11-12 may imply a form of unification (Thompson 1990, 64) in which women are re-integrated into the community because the fragmentation may otherwise have gone too far leading to the question of why women should be involved in the church at all if there is no benefit for them. In ch. 11 the anti-prophecy stand is also ideological in relation to women as their voices are silenced through the act of veiling.<sup>100</sup>

It seems likely that in 14:34-35 there is rationalisation going on to legitimate the silencing and subordination of women to men in the Corinthian congregation. This occurs throughout the

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<sup>98</sup>There is no doubt more ideology critique that can be done on 1 Corinthians and in particular the texts mentioned in the previous paragraph. Due to the nature of this project and limitations in space, however, I have limited my investigation to what appears in this chapter.

<sup>99</sup>I acknowledge that the translation could easily be “the husband is the head of the wife” since the terms for man and husband and woman and wife are the same and the same ambiguity occurs throughout the passage. In this regard, however, I follow Thiselton (2000, 822), and his assertion that “the issue concerns gender relations as a whole, not simply those within the more restricted family circle”. As a result the interpretation of this text should not be limited to husbands and wives alone.

<sup>100</sup>Cf. DeBaufre and Nasrallah (2011, 164).

passage by the text's implicit defence and legitimisation of normative Graeco-Roman patriarchal cultural values, motifs and traditions. In previous chapters of this thesis it has already been demonstrated that this cultural environment tendentially sought to subordinate women to men. Thus by the text's legitimisation of these normative patriarchal cultural practices, it clearly serves to maintain the systematically asymmetrical power relation between women and men.<sup>101</sup> Also women are to be silent in the church; men are not (v. 34). This too may be seen as an ideological fragmentation. Women are not even given space for direct communication with God in this passage, and are admonished to ask their own *paterfamilias* questions at home. Another mode of ideology implicit in v. 35 is dissimulation which is expressed using the ideological strategy of euphemisation (Thompson 1990, 62). This strategy comes about when, "actions, institutions or social relations are described or redescribed in terms which elicit a positive valuation" (Thompson 1990, 62).

In v. 35 the relegation and subordination of women to the private and ideally feminine, household sphere of life, is ideologically euphemised as a positive valuation. This verse, therefore, serves to maintain the normative patriarchal cultural mores of the dominant ancient Mediterranean society as delineated from ancient discursive sources, marginalising women to the private household sphere of life and subordinating them to men in general, who were free to live out their lives in the public (male) sphere of life.<sup>102</sup> In vv. 37-38 there is a definitive test for anyone who claims to be spiritually gifted: that individual has to recognise Paul's authority. Anyone who does not first recognise Paul's authority cannot have a voice of authority in the Corinthian community. These verses show that Paul has constructed a community that must first acknowledge his role and primary authority or "cease to exist" (Mount 2005, 329). As Wanamaker (2003b, 129) notes "a person like Paul who has the gift of the Spirit (2:12) and is therefore determined by the Spirit is capable of judging or examining everything, but cannot himself be examined because he is determined by the mind of Christ (2:15-16)".

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<sup>101</sup>See particularly chapters three to five.

<sup>102</sup>See chapter three.

### Conclusion.

As may be observed from the above discussion, 1 Corinthians is deeply embedded within a complex configuration of ideological texture that is highly gendered. It seems evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians tendentiously served to maintain and sustain the normative androcentric and kyriarchal asymmetrical power relations from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. This directly impacted upon the relationship between men and women in the church during the period of the first and second century. These power dynamics continue to have an effect on many churches today because they understand Scripture as normative for Christian practice today in spite of the temporal and cultural separation of our world from that of the world of the New Testament. As a result contemporary churches produce gendered power relations that have been established in *habitus* which in turn enables replicated gendered structurings in society. In this regard the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians may be viewed as a text that functions as discourse in the making and sustaining of gendered and ideological normativities that continue to structure gendered bodies and bodiliness.<sup>103</sup> It should be kept in mind that the structuredness of *habitus* came into being as the product of reiteration, and its dismantling similarly will come about as a result of reiteration. What becomes increasingly evident then from the discourse of 1 Corinthians through the theoretical lenses of ideology and gender-critical analysis is a gendered ideological “hidden transcript” (Scott 1990, 202, 206, 207).

This gendered ideological hidden transcript is superimposed onto and into the bodiliness of the Corinthian congregation by Paul as the progenitor of the Corinthian congregation. The dominant gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean world in its construction(s) and representation(s) of hegemonic masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) are inscribed onto and into the bodiliness of the Corinthians as normative and normalising in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.<sup>104</sup> This may be illustrated using Thompson’s strategies of ideology whereby ideal

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<sup>103</sup>My understanding of discourse in this regard is premised on Foucault (1980a, 93). He states that “[w]hat I mean is this: in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which

construction(s) and representation(s) of gender, taken from the dominant gendered logic of the ancient Mediterranean culture, are re-inscribed and enforced creating regulatory bodies. Also as has been asserted in this chapter, through the use of rhetoric Paul engages in many complex ideological moves to assert and re-establish his power and authority over the Corinthian community, as well as other church leaders. To the extent that this authority is accepted, it affords him the opportunity to direct them as he sees fit.

The rhetorical persuasiveness of Paul's discourse not only sought to re-establish and sustain Paul's position of authority over the Corinthian community, but it also had the concomitant power to shape and script the bodies of his audience to perform in certain gendered ways.<sup>105</sup> The performativity of biblical discourses is not limited to the ancient context and ancient bodiliness, however. It also has the power to script the bodies of contemporary Christians. In this manner biblical discourse becomes constitutive in scripting gendered normativities and the materialisation of Christian bodies (Vorster 2014, 5). As Vorster (2014, 3) maintains, "Relations of power have functioned in various ways as discourse in the construction and performance of gender, the production and reproduction of biblical texts, and the structuring and organisation of publics".

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operates through and on the basis of this association" (Foucault 1980a, 93).

<sup>104</sup>My emphasis.

<sup>105</sup>Cf. Vorster (2014, 2, 5).

## **Chapter 7.**

### **Conclusion.**

In this thesis I have combined SRI as a research analytics with a gender-critical approach to investigate how Paul through the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians constructs and represents gender in the discourse of the text. In order to set the landscape for my investigation, in chapter one, I first engaged in a discussion on contemporary identity and gender theory as it provides the key conceptual frameworks and analytical tools that informs my analysis of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in 1 Corinthians. Because the main focus for investigating contemporary issues surrounding gender theory was aimed at informing and foregrounding my investigation of ancient Mediterranean gender theory, I kept my discussion concise, with the main emphasis being on highlighting the social construction of the concepts of sex and gender.

The link between SRI, as a central research analytics employed in this thesis, to my discussions of both identity and gender was clarified by the contention that SRI aids me in addressing the gendered problematics of 1 Corinthians by equipping me with the necessary tools for my investigation of masculinity(ies) in chapter four and femininity(ies) in chapter five, but also my ideological texture analysis in chapter six. The reason SRI is useful in this regard is primarily because it envisages ancient text as tapestries filled with discursive nuances and provides the analytical optics through which to make more evident the gendered tapestry implicit in 1 Corinthians. The analysis set forward in my thesis has sought to take seriously the complexities of the ancient Mediterranean gender system(s) and the nuanced discursive and ideological frameworks that interact with this complex engendering system(s) in order to shed some light on how masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) are constructed and represented in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. My investigation of gender construction(s) and representation(s) in 1 Corinthians has demonstrated that the text is highly gendered and filled with complexity and ambivalence, unearthing an array of interpretive nuances and possibilities. The gendered machinations of the text script and structure engendering that more often than not configure bodies to perform according to the regulatory schemas and gendered normativities of the ancient Mediterranean.

In chapter three I embarked upon a discussion of the ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s) focusing on the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) within the gendered context of that epoch. But before I could do this, however, I first needed to provide a literature review of gender studies on 1 Corinthians to show the necessity of this thesis. In chapter two I demonstrated that none of the studies reviewed in the purview of that chapter focused on the construction(s) and representation(s) of male and female gender identity(ies) in 1 Corinthians, and this aspect became the focus of chapters four and five respectively. I argued that most studies on gendered issues in 1 Corinthians presuppose gender construction(s) and representation(s), but instead of grappling with these phenomena in particular, they analyse the results or symptoms of Paul's gender construction(s). As a result they fail to see that gender constructedness is key to comprehending his rhetoric.

A central argument in this thesis has been that the persuasiveness of 1 Corinthians rests on and enforces normative scriptings or performances of gendered identity(ies) from the broader cultural context. From the rhetorical vantage point of this thesis I have argued that Paul is engaged in the art of persuasion, and that his rhetoric is a rhetorical construction which shifts the focus from the historical issues at stake in the analysis of texts to the enquiry of more important issues of gender construction(s) and identity(ies) that are central to "ancient rhetorical theories of proper comportment and oratorical display" (Penner and Vander Stichele 2005c, 219). To this end my interest was directed to an examination of how gender is constructed and represented through the argumentative discourse of the text (chapters four and five), and also how Paul constructs his gendered identity in the text (chapter six). Because Paul converges with and participates within the larger discourses of the ancient Mediterranean sex and gender system(s), one cannot comprehend the gendered rhetoric of 1 Corinthians without recourse to its interconnections with ancient gender discourse in general. Furthermore, when Paul is engaged in persuasion through the discourse of 1 Corinthians, gender construction(s), because of the nature of gender in the ancient world, is precisely what is at stake. One cannot, therefore, comprehend the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians without understanding the gendered nature of the discourse.

In chapter four I was concerned with investigating how masculinity(ies) is constructed and represented within the text of 1 Corinthians. Using rhetography as an important analytical

tool as articulated by SRI, I demonstrated that a large component of the argumentation in 1 Corinthians creates a primarily masculine picture and so replicates normative construction(s) and representation(s) of hegemonic masculinity(ies) as a glaring “truth and/or reality” in the mind of the reader (Robbins 2009, xxvii). Similarly, as in the case of implementing rhetography as a useful analytical category, I argued that the rhetology of the discourse in 1 Corinthians in many places constitutes construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) in the text and in so doing replicates a particular gendered structuring and performativity.

In order to achieve my objectives in chapter four I engaged in an analysis of male gender construction(s) and representation(s) in 1 Corinthians. My findings in chapter four may be summarised under several points.

(1) The rhetorical argument used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 is based upon and reveals noticeable connections with the secular Graeco-Roman culture of the first to second century. These implicit connections are evident in the shape of normative patriarchal understandings of hegemonic masculinity(ies). By his implementation of normative Graeco-Roman cultural practices and values, it demonstrates that Paul was, not surprisingly, totally enculturated within the dominant cultural surroundings in which he lived. As a result he adopted a commonplace cultural understanding of masculinity(ies) that linked rhetorical displays to gender performativity.

At first it comes across that his presentation of himself as weak by standard cultural rhetorical assumptions detracts from his masculinity and in fact renders him (un)masculine and effeminate. At a second glance, however, it turns out to be a rhetorical move in which he manages to assimilate and subsume his deficient masculinity to that of Christ’s which then turns out to be a demonstration of hypermasculinity. But because this hypermasculinity mimics the culturally dominant “regulatory body” (Butler 1993, 1), it serves only to reiterate the very power that in the first place orchestrated its structuring, thus cementing the existing andronormative gendered social hierarchy. In 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5 I submit that Paul simultaneously and paradoxically demonstrates divine hypermasculinity through the person of Jesus. I also maintain that Paul here constructs himself as weak (feminine), only to state on the other hand that he is actually a “real man”.

(2) In his implementation of the father-children metaphor in 1 Cor. 4:14-21, Paul's discourse creates discursive gendered structurings that mimic the performativity of hegemonic masculinity(ies) as practised and re-iterated by the hegemonic gendered system(s) of that time. Paul's discursive argument in the text re-inscribes the dominant articulations of masculinity(ies) from the ancient world. In fact the power of this metaphor rests on the premise that masculinity(ies) must out of necessity reflect dominance and superiority. Paul's implementation of this metaphor serves inadvertently as a call for the re-enactment of hegemonic masculinity(ies), and in so doing it upholds the normative gendered hierarchy from the secular society as a standard for the Corinthian community.

(3). Paul's view on marriage in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 implies or creates a negative notion of masculinity(ies) and possibly even (un)masculinity in this text. Given the dominant gendered normativities of the ancient Mediterranean, the instructions by Paul in this text paints a more complex gendered matrix with some room for seemingly ambivalent construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies).

(4). I argued that the appeal for imitation in 4:6 and 11:1 is also, and maybe more significantly, an appeal for imitation of masculinity(ies). Using Moore (1996) as a dialogue partner I have argued that Paul's call for imitation (4:6; 11:1), was implicitly a call for gender performance, and in fact turns out to be a call for hypermasculinity which was aimed at the entire Corinthian congregation, including the women. As a result I maintain that the women too were called on to adopt this hypermasculine profile.

Then using social and cultural texture I have demonstrated that on a larger scale and in light of the overall discourse of 1 Corinthians' imitation rhetorics also plays a role and has implications for the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). Implementing an inquiry into the final cultural categories of the social and cultural texture of 1 Corinthians, I showed that Paul accepted the basic androcentric cultural values and knowledge protocols of the wider society and in his articulations of masculinity(ies) mostly replicated the dominant cultural script. In my discussion of final cultural categories, with the use of two of the topics, namely, dominant culture and subculture, I maintained that the discourse of 1 Corinthians appears to be comprised chiefly of subculture rhetoric. I also demonstrated that the text adopts normative



gendered cultural configurations and articulations from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture using its gendered systems (mainly the one-sex gendered model) and transposes those gendered aspects into the Christian community at Corinth with some amendment's to that of the hegemonic culture in its construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies). My investigation concluded that the church at Corinth mainly conforms to the cultural expectations and gendered structurings of the dominant culture by co-opting normative attitudes and behaviours consistent with the dominant culture. Paul through the texts investigated above, therefore, encourages, if not insists that the Christian household at Corinth mimic these aspects of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture.

In chapter five the conversation moved on to an investigation of the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. As mentioned previously in this thesis, gender delimitations and engendering brought about by the social constraints (regulatory schemas) of that epoch, necessitated what was construed as ideal masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) and permeated all social interactions in the ancient Mediterranean. In this chapter I demonstrated how certain passages within 1 Corinthians are scripted as feminine and very often construct and represent hegemonic femininity(ies) typical of the Graeco-Roman society. Furthermore, I argued, that the implicit gendered discourse of 1 Corinthians serves only to script women's bodies to mimetically perform along the lines of the dominant structurings of ideal femininity(ies). Similar to chapter four I followed on with a reading for a gender approach, informed by a cultural intertextual optic that zoomed in on the cultural intertexture as well as oral-scribal intertexture implied in the text. I focused my analysis upon the texts that I regarded imperative to the performativity of femininity(ies). In light of this I did not limit my analysis to texts that only specifically mention woman as a *topos* of inquiry, but instead, I looked more closely at the rhetorical performances of femininity(ies) within the discourse of the texts.

It is my contention that Paul in 1 Corinthians appropriates some of the leading notions of femininity(ies) from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture into his discourse and in so doing creates replicated gendered structurings. By adopting normative Graeco-Roman cultural practices and values, Paul makes explicit that he was totally enculturated within the dominant gendered frameworks from his cultural environment. As a result he adopted normative gendered

protocol and cultural motifs from that context and baptised it and tried to make it normative for the Corinthian community. In order to achieve my objectives in this chapter I focussed upon one specific topic within the text that I believe plays an integral part in the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies), namely: (1) Mother-infant metaphor in 1 Corinthians 3:1-2. In the first part of this chapter I illustrated that these texts are gendered texts and that they invoke particular gendered configurations which are crucial to how ancient readers viewed gender, as a pertinent marker of identity formation. In the second part of this chapter, using SRI's cultural intertexture as well as oral-scribal intertexture, I delineated how the discourse of 1 Corinthians constructs and represents femininity(ies) through its rhetoric in selected texts. In so doing I wanted to tie this chapter with the intertextual discussion of chapter four as well as to set the stage for the ideological texture analysis that would follow in chapter six. In light of this I, therefore, engaged in an intertextual analysis of key passages that have a bearing upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies) with a focus on how these phenomena (implicit signs) are used by Paul and also possibly why he used these phenomena in his discourse in 1 Corinthians.

My findings in chapter five may be summarised as follows: (1) It seems noticeably evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians is culturally embedded within the patriarchal milieu of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. I showed that the rhetorical arguments used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians replicate and re-inscribe some of the main gendered ideologies and assertions of the ancient Mediterranean culture from around the period of the first and second century. Further this chapter has shown, particularly in the section dealing with the construction(s) and representation(s) of femininity(ies), and the use of the mother-infant metaphor in 1 Cor. 3:1-4 that given the environment of the dominant ancient gender system(s), it seems reasonable, if not natural, to imagine that this text would cause it's readers to question Paul's (un)masculinity. The net result of this articulation, however, only serves to re-inscribe hegemonic femininity(ies) and normative gendered structurings typical of the household system and the hegemonic gendered logics from the broader society.

Cultural intertexture demonstrated that Paul co-opts normative cultural aspects from the "secular" Graeco-Roman society of the day and transposes them in different ways for the

Christian community at Corinth. In so doing the normative constructions and representations of ideal femininity(ies) are transposed into the Christian community as an expected and legitimate Christian gendered normativity. It seems apparent, therefore, that the rhetorical arguments used by Paul in the discourse of 1 Corinthians are constructed upon and evince noticeable signs from the hegemonic gendered system(s) of the Graeco-Roman world. These implicit signs may be seen in the shape of standard patriarchal and androcentric cultural values and commonplace cultural *topoi* which were used by Paul to construct and represent a depiction of femininity(ies) that ultimately mimicked the hegemonic gendered structurings of his epoch.

The result of this rhetorical configuration in his discourse in 1 Corinthians leads to the restriction of women in the congregation to function in accordance with their mundane and highly valued (positive shame) cultural role as subordinate householder. This cultural normality is further concretised in the text by the use of oral-scribal intertexture. This implies that Paul accepts those patriarchal cultural norms and values, which then lead him to re-inscribe them into the Christian community, calling on men and women to adhere to those culturally rooted directives.

In chapter six I moved my investigation of the construction(s) and representation(s) of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) in 1 Corinthians toward an analysis of how ideology and power intersect in the making of gendered normativities in Paul's discourse. Using ideological texture as delineated by SRI and its proponents, and in particular the advancements made to this texture as developed by Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b; 2006) as well as a gender-critical framework as a key analytical tool, I sought to explore ideology and power in the text. Power affects people kyriarchally and cuts across various social factors, such as gender, sex, religion, race and ethnicity. Because of this my ideology texture critique of 1 Corinthians would have been lacking without intersectionality theory. This theory, proved to be a helpful tool in chapter six as it demonstrates the complexities of power mechanisms and its impact upon different people. This was the main impetus for combining intersectionality theory into the discussions, and it allowed me further ammunition for the gendered trajectory to ideological inquiry that I called for.

I argued that Paul's rhetoric in 1 Corinthians is steeped with ideology and that the collective identity constructed by Paul for the Corinthian community in the discourse of 1

Corinthians is primarily portrayed as masculine identity which has a direct impact upon the construction(s) and representation(s) of gender in the text. With a focus on an analysis of “power struggles” in 1 Corinthians I showed that Paul’s rhetoric functions ideologically to assert his power over the Corinthian Christian community. In order to achieve my aims in that chapter I divided my discussion into three interrelated main sub-sections, each serving a specific purpose. (1) I attempted to give a brief overview of the understanding of ideology as presented by SRI and its proponents. This served as a means to evaluate the notion of ideological texture from a sociorhetorical perspective, as well as to support further developments to this texture that have a direct bearing upon my analysis. (2) I elucidated the understanding of ideology as implemented in this chapter. This proved critical to my analysis, as it supplied the theoretical backbone upon which to construct my investigation of the ideological nature of the discourse in 1 Corinthians. (3) I then used this understanding of ideology, to engage in a textually based ideological investigation of 1 Corinthians in an attempt to demonstrate that the power of the text’s rhetoric results from its ideological nature, or what Robbins (1996a, 36-40, 192-236; 1996b, 95-119) calls its ideological texture.

In order to demonstrate how Paul asserts his power to the Corinthian Christian community through the ideological means inherent in his discourse I employed the critical conceptualisation of ideology as developed by Thompson (1990), and applied to SRI by Wanamaker (2003a; 2003b) together with a gender-critical stance to ideology. Due to limitations in space, given the nature of this project, I did not discuss in detail the modes by which ideology functions or all of the strategies suggested by Thompson (1990, 61-67). In my analysis of 1 Corinthians, I did, however, employ many of the general modes by which ideology functions.

The results of chapter six are delineated in what follows. The discussion positions 1 Corinthians as deeply embedded within a complex configuration of ideological texture that is highly gendered. It seems evident that the discourse of 1 Corinthians tendentially served to maintain and sustain the normative androcentric and kyriarchal asymmetrical power relations from the dominant Graeco-Roman culture. These power dynamics continue to have an effect on many churches today because they understand Scripture as normative for Christian practice today in spite of the temporal and cultural separation of our world from that of the world of the New

Testament. As a result contemporary churches produce gendered power relations that have been established in *habitus* which in turn enables replicated gendered structurings in society. In this regard the rhetoric of 1 Corinthians may be viewed as a text that functions as discourse in the making and sustaining of gendered and ideological normativities that continue to structure gendered bodies and bodiliness in the church. It should be kept in mind that the structuredness of *habitus* came into being as the product of reiteration and its dismantling similarly will come about as a result of reiteration. What becomes increasingly evident then from the discourse of 1 Corinthians through the theoretical lenses of ideology and gender-critical analysis is a gendered ideological “hidden transcript” (Scott 1990, 202, 206, 207).

This gendered ideological hidden transcript is superimposed onto and into the bodiliness of the Corinthian congregation by Paul as the progenitor of the Corinthian congregation. The dominant gendered system(s) of the ancient Mediterranean world in its construction(s) and representation(s) of hegemonic masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) are inscribed onto and into the bodiliness of the Corinthians as normative and normalising in the discourse of 1 Corinthians. This was illustrated using Thompson’s strategies of ideology whereby ideal construction(s) and representation(s) of gender, taken from the dominant gendered logic of the ancient Mediterranean culture, are re-inscribed and enforced with the goal of creating regulatory bodies. Also, through the use of rhetoric Paul engages in many complex ideological moves to assert and re-establish his power and authority over the Corinthian community, as well as other church leaders. To the extent that this authority is accepted, it affords him the opportunity to direct them as he sees fit.

The rhetorical persuasiveness of Paul’s discourse not only sought to re-establish and sustain Paul’s position of authority over the Corinthian community, but it also had the concomitant power to shape and script the bodies of his audience to perform in certain gendered ways. The performativity of biblical discourses is not limited to the ancient context and ancient bodiliness, however. It also has the power to script the bodies of contemporary Christians. In this manner biblical discourse becomes constitutive in scripting gendered normativities and the materialisation of Christian bodies (Vorster 2014, 5).

As Vorster (2014, 3) maintains, “Relations of power have functioned in various ways as discourse in the construction and performance of gender, the production and reproduction of

biblical texts, and the structuring and organisation of publics”. Along this gendered trajectory of inquiry an investigative possibility emerges to “interrogate the interconnection of gender, biblical and public discourses” with a key focus upon contemporary Christian bodies in our South African context as sites of contestation of power and engendering where power relations and machinations “are produced, contested, amplified, refracted, and reproduced” (Vorster 2014, 3).

Because the social construction(s) of gendered identity(ies) constantly occur in an environment marked by power relationships, an interesting trajectory for further investigation could be explored. As a possible way forward from this thesis one avenue that could be further explored would be to unearth how engendered/engendering biblical discourses script bodies and bodiliness with regard to the habituated body/bodies of subjects [in light of power and ideology]. At this stage intersectionality theory becomes pivotal as a theoretical framework seeking to identify what types of bodies and bodiliness are constructed and cultivated in contemporary society in many churches that adhere to the “regulated body politics” as depicted in biblical texts and how contemporary Christians script their bodies in light of foundational biblical discourses. Particularly when Sacred texts are interpreted literally, and or for moral and ethical purposes or as a standard to gauge an individual or group’s spirituality and value system(s) that directly informs lived reality they can become oppressive.

This type of inquiry seeks to problematize and critique the hegemonic, heteronormative constructions of masculinity(ies) and femininity(ies) that have replicated producing power relations that have concretised in *habitus* which in turn enables replicated structurings in many Christian circles where the Bible is seen as central to lived reality. Keeping in mind that the structuredness of *habitus* came into being as the product of reiteration, its dismantling similarly will come about as a result of reiteration. If engendering is to be problematised, one should perhaps not only critically scrutinise those relations of power that have produced and benefit by its fixity, but also resist them, fully conscious of the multiplicity of power. Since reiteration has played a constitutive role in the formation of structuredness, this is also the area where “fissuring” may take place, where the very repetitive may be confronted and made subject to critique. Problematisation in this manner prompts towards questioning the ways in which essentialistic engendering is perpetuated in many churches in South Africa.

In this thesis I have demonstrated that the rhetorical argument contained in the discourse of 1 Corinthians, has as its matrix normative patriarchal and androcentric cultural assumptions and traditional motifs taken from the secular Graeco-Roman culture. In particular, those arguments related to gender construction(s) and representation(s) of that epoch, which tendentiously sought to maintain the gendered hierarchies contained in the hegemonic gender system(s) from that cultural dispensation. As a result men were regarded as above women, children and slaves, in a kyriarchal and intersectionally regulated gendered hierarchy, thereby relegating them to the domestic and private sphere of the household to perform according to the cultural normativities for their “constituted” and “(re)constituted” gender identities (Butler 1993, ix).

Throughout the discourse of 1 Corinthians, it appears that Paul co-opts commonplace patriarchal cultural aspects from the “secular” Graeco-Roman society of the day and transposes them in different ways for the Christian community at Corinth as an expected and legitimate Christian norm. This implies that Paul and the Christians whom he sought to address were thoroughly inculturated in Graeco-Roman culture and therefore unquestioningly accepted the basic androcentric cultural values and knowledge systems of the wider society. This then leads Paul to re-inscribe these cultural directives into the emerging Christian culture, calling on women and men to adhere to the regulatory schemas and regulatory body politics firmly concretised by the *habitus* of the ancient Mediterranean and its hierarchical gendered structurings and machinations. It seems, therefore, that the type of cultural position cultivated within this text is made up chiefly of subcultural rhetoric, where, Paul, through the discourse of 1 Corinthians, is encouraging, if not insisting that the church he addresses conform to the cultural expectations of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture by adopting its normative attitudes and behaviours.

This is particularly interesting as it shows that the origins of the rhetoric in 1 Corinthians and also the Christian values it propagates are simply the “best” cultural practices from the patriarchal and androcentric culture of the day. This latter aspect plays an important interpretive role in placing the text within its proper social and cultural context and should help prevent a modern interpreter from superimposing his or her own cultural views on to the text. Conversely this focus should caution a modern interpreter against superimposing the socially and culturally

bound aspects of the text onto modern day Christianity. At the same time it calls into question the ideological use of this text to perpetuate gender replications and sedimenting that further establish kyriarhcal gendered assumptions from a distant world view and context.

The notion of sedimented bodies by Butler (1993, xix) seems fitting here too. As she states with respect to sex and gender, “Construction not only takes place *in* time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms”. Bodies and engendering is manufactured and destabilised in the very act of reiteration “[a]s a sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice” (Butler 1993, xix). Bodies acquire its seemingly naturalised state through this process of recitation:

[A]nd, yet, it is also by virtue of this reiteration that gaps and fissures are opened up as the constitutive instabilities in such constructions, as that which escapes or exceeds the norm, as that which cannot be wholly defined or fixed by the repetitive labor of that norm. This instability is the deconstituting possibility in the very process of repetition, the power that undoes the very effects by which ‘sex’ is stabilized, the possibility to put the consolidation of the norms of ‘sex’ into a potentially productive crisis” (Butler 1993, xix).

This thesis has thus demonstrated that the discourse of 1 Corinthians reflects first and foremost the secular culture of the day, rather than an inherent Christian culture. It does not seem appropriate, therefore, for contemporary Christians to interpret the complex gendered passages in an ideological manner as though it reflects some kind of prescriptive divine Christian culture, suitable for all times. Paul’s gender conceptualisation(s) as represented in 1 Corinthians reflects his ideological opinion constructed primarily in terms of the first and second century Graeco-Roman cultural values and traditions, as well as Paul’s own Jewish cultural values and traditions.

I argue that he has unconsciously accepted the patriarchy of the dominant Graeco-Roman culture without questioning its validity for the construction of a new and alternative Christian culture. I propose, therefore, that the gender conceptualisation(s) represented in 1 Corinthians is time bound and culture bound, and, therefore, cannot be superimposed as a normative Christian



standard suitable for the contemporary world, particularly in first world settings. This implies that the various ideological interpretations posited in many churches and by many people, and used to authenticate androcentric gender relations needs to be called into question through critical analysis and re-evaluation. Butler (1993, xxii) once again proves helpful here when she comments on the notion of regulatory schemas and mentions, “The force and necessity of these norms . . . is thus functionally *dependent on* the approximation and citation of the law; the law without its approximation is no law or, rather, it remains a governing law only for those who would affirm it”.

Similarly Paul’s authority is “repeatedly fortified and idealized” as authoritative “only to the extent that it is reiterated” as authoritative “by the very citations it is said to command” (Butler 1993, xxii). In this way Paul’s discourse is seen to carry power only in its approximation. The measure that it is re-enacted or reiterated by the Corinthian community determined the level at which his discursive power was solidified or rejected. Not only is the efficacy of Paul’s discursive power directly related to the acceptance of that discourse by the Corinthian congregation, but in accepting his discourse as powerful and authoritative, his rhetoric becomes normative and normalising. As a result gendered normativities implicit in his rhetoric become cemented as social reality for the Corinthian community and anyone in a contemporary world setting who accepts Paul’s discourse as power. I suggest that this interpretation reflects a more holistic interpretation of the texts than those that ignore the gendered conceptualisation(s) of women and men in 1 Corinthians and the origins of that gendered conceptualisation(s) in Graeco-Roman culture. The interpretation presented in this thesis may lead to more liberating life experiences for those churches and church members who often fall prey to stereotypical, androcentric, reiteration of ancient gendered normativities, as if they were “natural” to the Corinthians and therefore, should be “natural” in contemporary settings.

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